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the weekly Standard

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The FBI seems to have no idea who sent it, but won't let go of its "lone American" theory.

BY DAVID TELL

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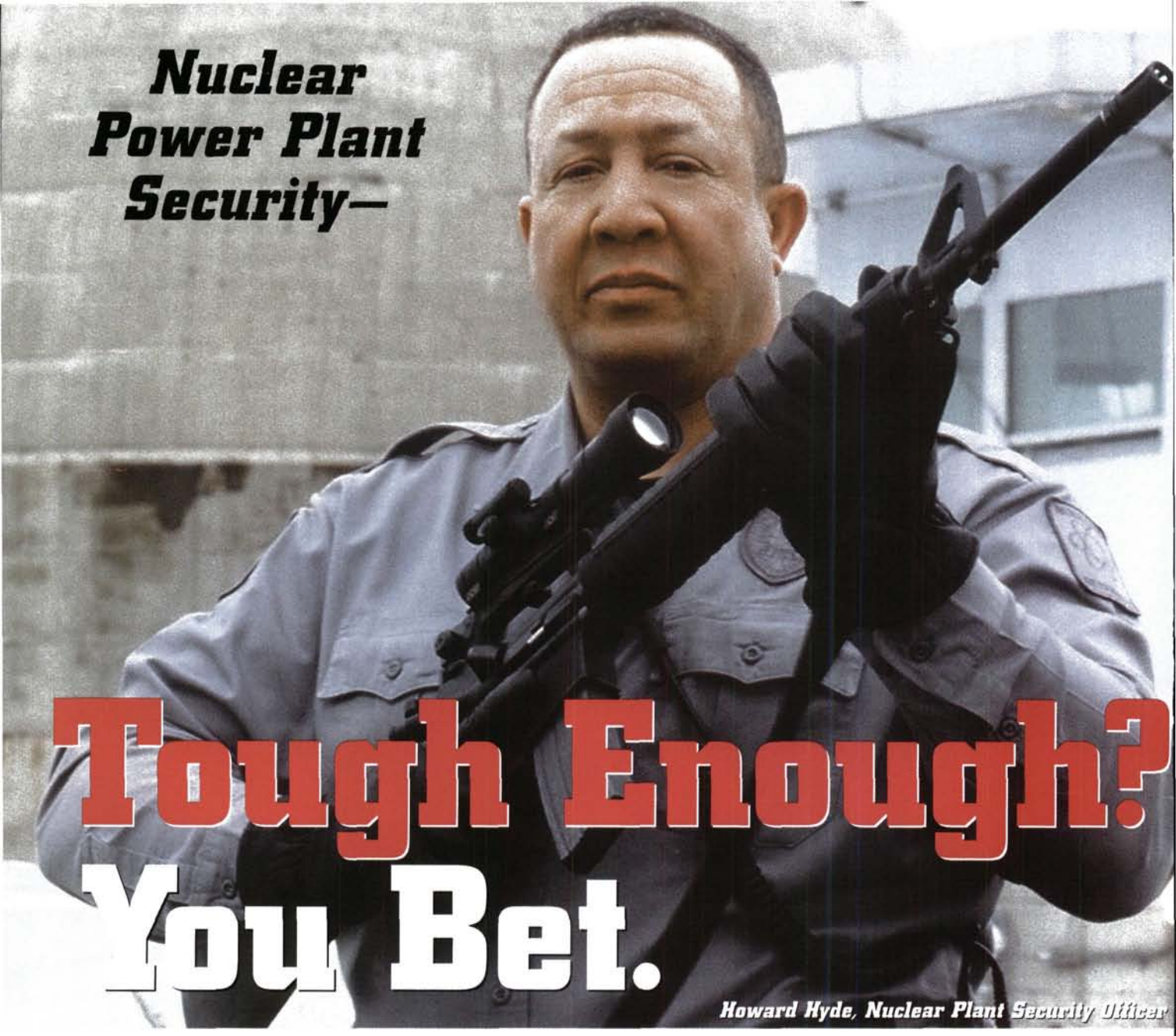

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Europe Isn't Hopeless

It's depressingly true that practically every European paper of note last week decided to "report" on the pitched urban warfare in Jenin between the Israeli Defense Force and Palestinian terrorists and fighters as if what had taken place there were a "massacre" by ruthless Israelis. Such political unanimity among the elites of the continent has rarely been observed during the last, oh, 60 years or so.

But the single most eloquent response to Europe's shameful obsession with anti-Israel propaganda has also come from Europe, in the form of a pamphlet by Oriana Fallaci published April 12 by the Italian newsweekly *Panorama*. The Fallaci polemic has quickly found sympathetic readers by the thousands across Europe and around the world. French journalist Anne-Elisabeth Moutet, who runs an Internet mailing list called *Reponses-Israel*, told THE SCRAPBOOK that she had "received so many messages of thanks" after making available a French translation that she had to set up a separate e-mail address for all the fan mail, which "received hundreds of messages from the most unexpected places (Australia, Bosnia, Morocco)."

An English translation by Chris and Paola Newman has been widely circulated on websites and in e-mails. Here are some excerpts for THE SCRAPBOOK's many old-fashioned, non-wired readers:

"I find it shameful that in France, the France of Liberty-Equality-Fraternity, they burn synagogues, terrorize Jews, profane their cemeteries. I find it shameful that the youth of Holland and Germany and Denmark flaunt the kaffiah just as Mussolini's avant garde used to flaunt the club and the fascist badge. I find it shameful that in nearly all the universities of Europe, Palestinian students sponsor and nurture anti-Semitism....

"I find it shameful that state-run television stations in Italy contribute to the resurgent anti-Semitism, crying only over Palestinian deaths while playing down Israeli deaths, glossing over them in unwilling tones. I find it shameful that in their debates they host with much deference the scoundrels with turban or kaffiah who yesterday sang hymns to the slaughter at New York and today sing hymns to the slaughters at Jerusalem, at Haifa, at Netanya, at Tel Aviv. I find it shameful that the press does the same, that it is indignant because Israeli tanks surround the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem, that it is not indignant because inside that same church are 200 Palestinian terrorists well armed with machine guns and munitions and explosives....

"I find it shameful that *L'Osservatore Romano*, the newspaper of the pope—a pope who not long ago left in the Wailing Wall a letter of apology for the Jews—accuses of extermination a people who were exterminated in the millions by Christians. By Europeans. I find it shameful that this newspaper denies to the survivors of that people (survivors who still have numbers tattooed on their arms) the right to react, to defend themselves, to not be exterminated again....

"I find it shameful that many Italians and many Europeans have chosen as their standard-bearer the gentleman (or so it is polite to say) Arafat. This nonentity who thanks to the money of the Saudi royal family plays the Mussolini *ad perpetuum* and in his megalomania believes he will pass into History as the George Washington of Palestine.... This false warrior who always goes around in uniform like Pinochet, never putting on civilian garb, and yet despite this has never participated in a battle. War is something he sends, has always sent, others to do for him. That is, the poor souls who believe in him. This pompous incompetent who playing the part of Head of State caused the failure of the Camp David negotiations.... This weathercock who keeps his wife at Paris, served and revered like a queen, and keeps his people down in the shit. He takes them out of the shit only to send them to die, to kill and to die, like the 18-year-old girls who in order to earn equality with men have to strap on explosives and disintegrate with their victims. And yet many Italians love him, yes. Just like they loved Mussolini. And many other Europeans do the same." ♦

Mommy Dearest

As a matter of policy, THE SCRAPBOOK generally refrains from mocking the handicapped, cuddly animals, or members of the Osmond family. But we're forced to make an exception just this once. Last week, the National Mother's Day Committee announced it will be dispensing its annual "Outstanding Mothers of the Year Awards." In years past, distinguished mothers like Kathie Lee Gifford (who never missed a chance to use her children in her treacly Christmas specials) and Dr. Ruth Westheimer were honored. This year, Marie Osmond is one of the recipients.

The best we can tell, Osmond's qualifications seem to be that she suffered from post-partum depression after the birth of her seventh child. But Marie's wasn't just any post-par-

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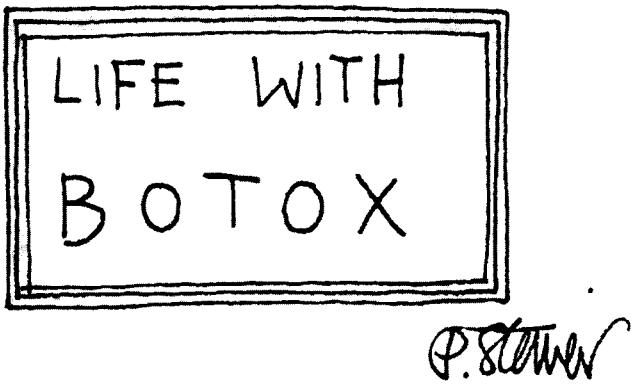

tum episode, an affliction suffered by millions of women who don't receive awards for their woes. Hers was celebrity post-partum depression, which means her condition manifested itself in several unique ways. "She couldn't figure out what to eat," said one writer on Osmond's now-cancelled show. "We'd get her smoothies and order stuff like salmon and fresh fruit for her lunch. I could tell she was completely unable to make a selection."

Osmond's condition culminated in her abandoning her children for a few days, handing her newborn off to one of her (two!) nannies, and driving up the California coast, where she slept in a fleabag motel until her scared-witless husband could track her down. She did come back of course, so she could raise her family, and more important, write a book about her troubles (*Behind the Smile*). She also talks about her affliction, and talks, and talks and talks—to Bryant and Paula and Katie, often while offering not-very-convincing defenses of fellow post-partum sufferers, like bathtub-murderer Andrea Yates.

In the spirit of Marie (which we like to think of as "a little bit country, a little bit nausea-inducing"), THE SCRAPBOOK would like to offer our Outstanding Father of the Year selection. He is Luther Crawford, 49, of Louisville, Kentucky. Though Luther doesn't have any nannies or smoothies or salmon, he does have 12 children by 11 different women. He owes at least $54,000 in child support, is blind in one eye and nearly blind in the other, has high blood pressure, and a heart problem. That would be enough to drag most fathers down. But Luther isn't most fathers. He's currently fighting a clause in the plea agreement he reached to settle the support cases. That clause forbids him from having sex again. Presumably, Luther feels he has more children to father. We salute his courage. ♦

Lede of the Week

Brilliant reporting from Mariam Fam of the AP, in an April 18 dispatch:

"CAIRO, Egypt—Amr Sayed, 17, says he supports calls raised across the Arab world to boycott U.S. companies because of Washington's perceived pro-Israel bias. But on Thursday, as he munched on fries and a burger in a downtown McDonald's, he said there was no Egyptian alternative to the U.S. franchise that he just happens to like." ♦

Read *The New Republic*!

Well, at least one piece. Besides the cover pieces in last week's WEEKLY STANDARD, we're delighted to recommend as required reading on the topic of cloning the essay by contributing editor Charles Krauthammer, "Crossing Lines," in this week's *New Republic*. Let no one say we never praise the competition. ♦

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Casual

Chicago Bull

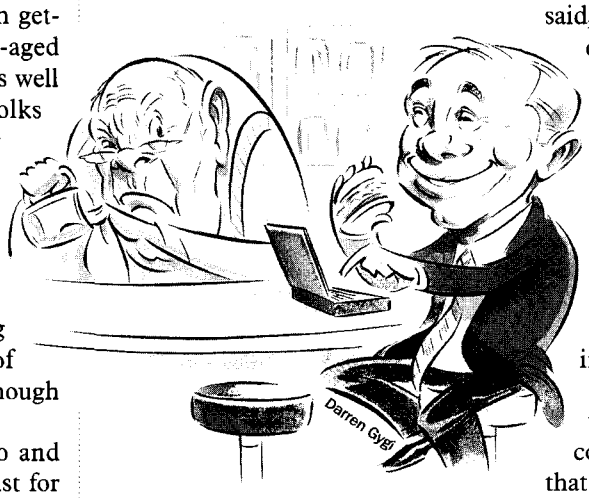
Call me Jack Kerouac. I'm sitting in the Billy Goat Tavern in Chicago writing stream of consciousness-style while memories of my past pretensions flow back to me. The Billy Goat is under Michigan Avenue between the *Chicago Tribune* building and the *Sun-Times* building. It became famous when John Belushi did the "Cheeseboiger, cheeseboiger. No fries. Chips" skits for *Saturday Night Live*.

Since then it has somehow become a tourist trap without losing its authenticity. There are still real life Chicago reporters and pressmen getting beers at the bar, middle-aged drunks noodling at the tables, as well as all the health-conscious folks from modern America looking around. The secret of the place is the cheeseburgers, which are fantastic, though nobody can figure out why, since the frozen patties are standard issue and the grill offers nothing special except seven decades of grime. I think it's the pickles, though reasonable men differ.

I went to college in Chicago and afterwards worked as a columnist for a local weekly and as a police reporter for a legendary outfit called the City News Bureau. It was then my ambition, and a fine one, to be a three-day-a-week blue-collar columnist for one of the Chicago dailies, and I didn't let the fact that I was neither a proletarian nor a Chicagoan get in the way of my dream.

Chicago was then a great newspaper town, with great columnists, of whom Mike Royko was only the exemplar. Mayor Harold Washington was fighting the council wars against the white machine led by Fast Eddie Vrdolyak. I admired Vrdolyak because he was transparently crooked, got a degree from the University of Chicago Law School, wore gold pinkie rings and neck chains, coached in a children's basketball league which I believe he fixed because his teams were perpetually 17-0, was surrounded by rumors of homicide, and tied up Chicago government in ways that would have made Boss Tweed gape and applaud. I admired Mayor Washington because he was a good mayor and he hated Jesse Jackson.

During their showdowns, Chicago seemed like the center of the universe. One survey found that over half of all city council members were packing heat in the chamber. I remember later Dan Rostenkowski had a choice between becoming chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee and running for mayor of Chicago. He chose Ways and Means. We were all flabbergasted. Why would anybody choose some meaningless committee in Washington when he could be mayor of the entire known universe?



At least I learned about journalism. My first day I was asked to figure out why a teenager had committed suicide by calling all his neighbors to see if he acted nuts. Then I had to call the widow of a guy who'd died in a car crash that morning and get a comment out of her. Since that day, I've never been able to take the phrase "journalistic ethics" seriously.

My pretensions were not limited to Royko-wannabeism. Just north of here at Water Tower Place I bought my only pack of Gitanes, though I don't think I'm to blame since it was my professors at college who assigned French poets in the first place. I once wrote a noteworthy article, which was rejected by every publication in Chicago, on the subject of hotel lobbies. To get out of my grim college neighborhood I used to come to the Loop and do my reading. If I was reading an American novel, like Dreiser, I'd go to the Palmer House, which had a 19th-century American lobby. If it was Tolstoy or Flaubert, I'd go to the Drake, where they had a harpist and you could buy scones.

I walked by the Drake last winter and the doorman stopped me and said, "I liked the way you used Bourdieu in *Bobos in Paradise*." In other words, a hotel doorman (a) recognized me, (b) knew me as the author of a book published a couple of years before, and (c) knew about Pierre Bourdieu, the impenetrable French sociologist. I gently asked him what he was doing as a doorman. He said what he really enjoyed was reading, and being a doorman was a nice relaxing job that didn't distract his mind from the books he consumed after hours. Somehow that struck me as very Chicago.

The last time I was here at the Billy Goat they had two Hispanic guys working at the grill, but they still chanted out the "Cheeseboiger, cheeseboiger . . ." orders in Greek accents, just to keep up the mood of the place. Tonight the guy behind the bar is a seventy-something white man whose skin probably last experienced sunlight during the first Daley administration. He's glaring at me now because I'm sitting here with a laptop open, which is very un-Billy Goat. I've moved on to another set of pretensions, apparently.

The Cubs are losing on TV, by the way.

David Brooks

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Bourgeoisomania

As a Jewish kid growing up in the Soviet Union during the 1970s, I experienced the deep misunderstanding and envy of America that David Brooks writes about in "Among the Bourgeoisophobes" (April 15). Many in my family were able to overcome the rampant anti-Semitism of Soviet society to rise to prominence in the fields of education, science, and national defense. But a prerequisite for joining the Soviet "intelligentsia," and any other European intelligentsia for that matter, was a hatred of America.

There has always been, as Brooks so eloquently describes, a bourgeois attitude toward the West among the intellectuals in European society. My relatives in the diplomatic corps spoke of visits to the pillars of European society including Paris, Belgrade, Brussels, Berlin, and Rome. Every conversation about the West included rants on America's greed, lack of sophistication, bad manners, and puritanism.

Twenty-five years later, as a naturalized U.S. citizen, I have lived the American dream. I have owned a couple of companies, drive a nice import, live on the North Shore of Long Island, and send my daughters to private schools.

My father, who brought me to this country at age 11, is now comfortably retired in Florida. These days he argues that Jefferson and Locke were far superior to Nietzsche and Dostoyevsky. He also argues that Norman Mailer, a man he once deeply admired when he lived in the Soviet Union, is a degenerate.

Euroworld intellectuals will never understand us. One must live in this country to fully understand its beauty.

Alex Renko
Northport, NY

David Brooks's article is a brilliant exploration into the "hate America" attitude that exists around the world and within our own country as well. My uncle has lived in various places throughout Europe over the past 15 years. During each visit home, he insists on illuminating his bourgeois, midwestern family about the European opinion of America. My response to him is often the same—who cares?

While European snobs sit around in pubs and cafés snorting about the idiocy of our president, probably only 10 percent of Americans could name the prime minister of Great Britain. Far fewer could name the president of France. It's not stupidity or even arrogance that drives this unawareness; it's the sheer fact that no one gives a hoot because, for the most part, it doesn't matter.

Julie Kelly
Oak Forest, IL

As an exercise in jingoistic chest-thumping, David Brooks's "Among the Bourgeoisophobes" is hard to beat. His rage at world indifference to America's charms is a sad document

marked by an overweening and aggressive smugness.

So, the United States is imperially confident? It maintains heroic aspirations? Such talk is nonsense. The nation will have to settle for being a member of a family—one among many. It may be the biggest and the strongest, but there are strictures upon the use of its power. The events of September 11 gave no license to exert unfettered power or become a world policeman. However it may stick in Brooks's craw, the simple fact remains that other nations—even America's dutiful, often supine, ally Down Under—don't believe the American Way to be the apotheosis of human endeavor.

Presumably, Brooks sees meritocratic capitalist culture as the apex of civilization. He even considers Bush the Younger to be its product. The lowly inhabitants of other nations tend to see him as the undereducated son of a rich dad whose oil-enriched mates herded him into the White House.

Brooks asserts that the United States has never lashed out violently or pointlessly. He's right about the latter—there is always a point to foreign policy decisions and they are always based on the protection of perceived economic interests. The violent history of U.S. policy is only too evident: Vietnam, Central America, Chile, etc. Moreover, the civilian dead in Afghanistan—measured in their thousands—will be delighted to know of America's benign intent.

Kevin Summers
Melbourne, Australia

For the past six months, and indeed for much of our lives, Americans were left to choose between blind patriotism and apologetic self-disgust. David Brooks gives us a third choice. Typically, the line was drawn between the educated, who understood pursuing American interests to be avaricious and immoral, and the uneducated, who were quickly dismissed as ignorant. However meritocratic capitalism was, it was never about rampant accumulation or self-indulgence; it was the understanding that those with ability should be able to obtain power and wealth according to their efforts.

When people are allowed to do so they grow intellectually and spiritually even if they fail to rise to the level to which they aspire. Indeed, the moral benefits of our society can be seen in the aftermath of the September 11 terrorist attacks.

David Kendall
Chicago, IL

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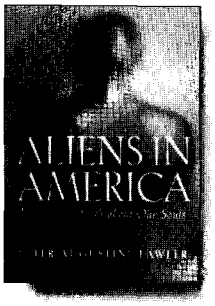

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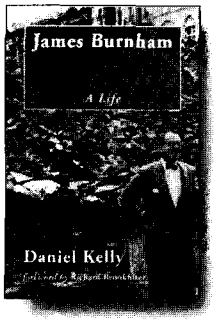

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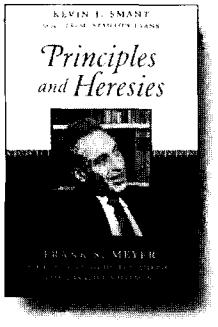

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the weekly Standard

Back on Track?

Why were we worried about Secretary of State Colin Powell's trip to the Middle East? After all, for one crucial week, Powell ended up providing diplomatic cover for an ongoing Israeli military operation that has made significant strides against the terrorist infrastructure in the Palestinian territories. Powell kept the Europeans and Arabs and the American media bedazzled, or at least confused, while Israeli prime minister Ariel Sharon carried out difficult operations against Nablus and Jenin and other hotbeds of radical terrorism, arresting hundreds of known terrorists and uncovering mountains of weaponry and suicide-bomb-making paraphernalia. When Powell left the region last week, Israeli forces remained entrenched in Ramallah and in Bethlehem, with significant forces poised on the outskirts of most other major Palestinian towns and refugee camps. Yasser Arafat remained under house arrest, with no prospects for release any time soon.

Yes, we understand that helping Israel fight its war was not exactly the point of Secretary Powell's trip. Nor, unfortunately, was this President Bush's intention when he ordered Israel to stop and withdraw two weeks ago, saying "enough is enough." But Sharon saved the Bush administration from itself by not listening. More specifically, he saved the president from his advisers, who over the past month have behaved as amateurs in this moment of high stakes diplomacy. We'd love to know which of the president's top foreign policy advisers assured him that Sharon would obey a command to withdraw, and thereby set up Bush for his weakest moment since September 11.

After four weeks of moral and strategic confusion, the president seems to have found his way out of the wilderness.

Now it appears the president is following his own instincts again. Once Powell had returned, Bush swung back behind Israel, declaring Sharon a "man of peace," and implicitly endorsed the continued confinement of Arafat and the continued military occupation of Ramallah and other Palestinian areas. While praising Sharon, the president returned to his condemnation of Palestinian terrorism, blaming the Arab states and Yasser Arafat for doing too little—actually, nothing—to stop it. After four weeks of moral and strategic confusion that threatened real damage to American interests, the president seems to have found his way out of the wilderness. He has rediscovered the Bush doctrine.

And not a moment too soon. A little over a week ago Saddam Hussein held a meeting with his top nuclear scientists. According to an Iraqi newspaper (meaning there was an official "leak"), Saddam told the bomb-makers to accelerate the pace of their work "with the goal of defending Iraq." While the president and his team have been ineffectually playing at peacemaking, Saddam has been moving ahead into a new era, a new age of horrors where terrorists don't commandeer jumbo jets and fly them into our skyscrapers. They plant nuclear bombs in our cities.

What have the president and his team been doing about this grave threat in the three months that have passed since Bush gave his historic "Axis of Evil" speech? So far as we can tell, not enough. There is not much sign of urgency in the planning for an invasion of Iraq, no organized effort to support the Iraqi opposition, no public diplomacy to speak of either at home or abroad, no pressure on our Arab "friends" to make their choice between supporting us and supporting the terrorists.

This past week, President Bush returned to his Axis of Evil rhetoric, and we were glad to hear it. But words aren't enough anymore. It's time to act. We need to begin right now taking practical and visible steps toward the removal of Saddam Hussein. It's surely time to order the Pentagon to prepare a battle plan that can be executed before the end of this year. Time to instruct the secretary of state that his top priority now is preparing allied support for action against Iraq. Time to begin the serious arming and training of the Iraqi opposition. Time to rid the Middle East of a vicious predator who is working full time to get a nuclear bomb.

The Arab world, many Europeans, and some Americans hoped that the Middle East peace process would absorb the Bush administration's energy, and delay or thwart any move against Iraq. Their coordinated effort to drag the administration into peace-processing, and away from war-preparing, worked for much of the past month. The administration shouldn't allow itself to get sidetracked again.

—Robert Kagan and William Kristol

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Better to Be Feared Than Loved, cont.

Especially in the Middle East.

BY REUEL MARC GERECHT

IT HAS RAPIDLY BECOME accepted wisdom in Washington that the United States is in ever-worsening trouble in the Arab Middle East. The collapse of the peace process between the Israelis and the Palestinians has, according to this zeitgeist, left America bereft of friendly Muslims in the region, thereby jeopardizing both the Bush administration's global campaign against terrorism and its inchoate plans to topple Saddam Hussein's regime in Iraq. In particular, Ariel Sharon's military incursion into the West Bank, which has reinvigorated in the Arab mind all the awful imagery of General Sharon's drive to Beirut in 1982, has crippled Secretary of State Colin Powell's quest for "an integrated strategy" for the Middle East and humiliated the president, who'd urged an Israeli withdrawal "without delay." American credibility among the Arabs, so the theory goes, is in tatters.

Fortunately, this depiction of the United States in the Arab world makes no sense. The reverse is probably closer to the truth: that America is actually now in a far stronger position to prosecute a war against the Baathist regime in Iraq than it was before the Israeli Defense Forces reoccupied the West Bank. Its standing in the Arab world, that is, its ability to achieve its strategic goals, has gone up, not down, because of Israel's recent military operations. Israel's house-to-house combat in Jenin will undoubtedly reinforce Arab awe at Israeli prowess. This can only aid President Bush's larger war against terrorism rooted in Islamic militancy. Jenin, like the battle of Tyre, Sidon, and Beirut in '82, may make a real peace between the Israelis and the Palestinians of the West Bank and Gaza someday possible. One look at Palestinian chairman Yasser Arafat today—hyperventilating, shaking, stuttering in both English and Arabic, pathetically appealing to memories of "my brother" Israeli prime minister Yitzhak Rabin (as if that seasoned general wouldn't have pulverized the Palestinian Authority for its holy-warrior kamikaze attacks on Israeli civilians)—should tell us that we are probably at the dawn of a post-Arafat era in Palestinian politics. That would be very good, for only when Arafat is gone will there be a real chance for an adequate settlement of the differences among the denizens of the Holy Land.

This continuing misapprehension of the Arab-Israeli conflict and its impact on the U.S. position in the Middle East is distressing, though not surprising, 52 years after Israel survived its first Arab war. Wrapped up in the peace process are bureaucratic equities—primarily those of the State Department and the Central Intelligence Agency—and analyses that span several generations. But the reality is that Israel's repeated victories over the frontline Arab states have enormously increased Washington's coin from Morocco to Iran. The American-Israeli nexus has been for many, if not most, Arabs an inextricable part of the American mystique, the recurring reminder that Western power could not be overcome. The Egyptian leader Anwar Sadat understood this well, which is why he decided to move away from the pro-Soviet, anti-American, and anti-Israeli camp. Sadat's successor, Hosni Mubarak, who has played a two-faced game with America, supporting Washington in VIP meetings while encouraging vicious anti-American propaganda in his controlled popular press, still understands the reality of American power and the unchallengeable ties between Washington and Jerusalem.

Muslim militants and fundamentalists, who see culture and religion in crystal clear terms, have never had any difficulty discerning this indissoluble power nexus. The fundamentalists understand that the United States will not become "evenhanded" toward the Arab Muslim world since liberal democracies align naturally with each other. And Arab Muslim states (so fundamentalists fervently pray) can never become liberal democracies. For the militants and fundamentalists in Islamic Jihad, Hamas, and no doubt in many of the security and paramilitary organizations of the Palestinian Authority, Israel is the cutting edge of liberal Western civilization. It's America's base camp in the Muslim *umma*, the social, religious, and geographic sphere of Muslim sovereignty, where non-Muslims must be subordinated to a Muslim-controlled political system.

And when you look at militant Islamic literature—the statements of Osama bin Laden and his holy-warrior organization al Qaeda are illuminating examples—you of course don't find Sharon's crushing military victories over Egypt in 1973 and the PLO in 1982 as evidence of the promise that Israel can be destroyed. Sharon is the Devil's right-hand man, the warlord who makes the battle between Good and Evil in the fundamentalist mind such a close, precarious struggle. American and European liberals may loathe Sharon, who is a rampaging, politically incorrect expression of realpolitik, but his antagonists in the Middle East fear him. What they do not fear, and what has been the font of

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the militants' hopes, is the Israel under Prime Minister Ehud Barak that precipitously withdrew from Lebanon in the summer of 2000 and attempted through concessions to grasp permanent peace treaties with Syria and Arafat. What they do not fear is the America that ran from Beirut truck-bombs in 1983 and from rocket-propelled grenades in Mogadishu in 1993.

Osama bin Laden and other Muslim militants, like the leaders of Hamas, Islamic Jihad, and in his own profound way Arafat, are quite sensible strategists: They inspire the young with hope, not depression; with victories, not defeat. They do not promise that Israel or the United States will be like ancient Rome at its height—that legion will follow legion until its enemies are crushed or scattered in an endless exile. Their promises are not millenarian. They are in the near future. As the Palestinian Authority was fond of broadcasting before Sharon decided to reverse the decade-old habit of Israeli restraint, the "final struggle" was at hand.

With his decisive victory on the West Bank—and it *is* decisive just because Sharon did it and everyone in Israel and the Arab world knows that he will do it again—Sharon is in the process of pushing the Arab idea of coercing and dominating Israel into the distant future, beyond the immediate passions of young Palestinian men and women, who live for the present. Probably far sooner than most people imagine possible—a few years, not decades—the defeat of Israel through terrorism will become for most Palestinians what the conquest of Constantinople was for the medieval Arab world, an appealing image that no longer sufficiently inspires. When that happens, some kind of peace process between the Israelis and the Palestinians of the West Bank and Gaza will become possible. Assuming of course the United States can neutralize the increasing interference of Iraq and Iran. The Camp David discussions of July 2000 will look then to the Palestinians like a mythical promised land.

Washington needs to look back at Lebanon in 1982—the cerebral cortex of those who despise Sharon in the Middle East, Europe, and America—to see how the Palestinians' worst defeat failed to damage the United States's position in the Middle East. Relations with the Arab states continued as before, which was not necessarily a good thing, since our tolerance of such regimes as Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Syria—the perpetrators of enormous anti-American mischief—has harmed the United States for decades in the region. With accusations of "blitzkrieg" and slaughter in the print media and on both Arab and Western television (remember NBC's John Chancellor), the mythical Arab street did not rise. Furthermore, oil boycotts never developed. If one recalls the relative supply-and-demand price stability in the energy markets throughout the 1980-88 Iran-Iraq War, it is very hard to take seriously all the talk on both sides of the Atlantic about the regional or international impact of the Israeli-Palestinian confrontation.

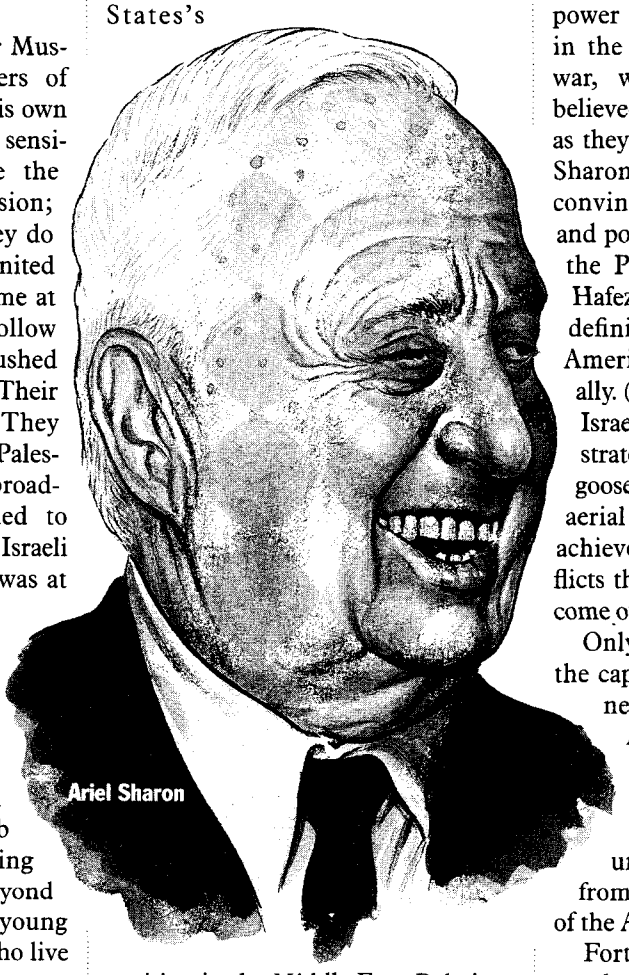
Ariel Sharon

Illustration by Drew Friedman

In 1982, American diplomats and case officers abroad may have had a few unpleasant dinners and meetings with their Arab counterparts, but U.S. power and influence wasn't belittled in the region. On the contrary, the war, which the Arabs uniformly believed Washington had sanctioned, as they now believe it has sanctioned Sharon's incursions, demonstrated convincingly to all America's reach and power. Israel made mincemeat of the PLO and Syria, which under Hafez al-Assad learned painfully and definitively the costs of war with America's closest Middle Eastern ally. (The Lebanon war between the Israelis and the Syrians also demonstrated to the Soviet Union that its goose was cooked in both armor and aerial combat. Not an insignificant achievement in the third-world conflicts that greatly determined the outcome of the Cold War.)

Only the Bush administration has the capacity to undo America's eminence in the Middle East. The Arabs can't and most won't really even try. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict cannot diminish the United States unless President Bush pivots from an ahistorical understanding of the Arab Middle East.

Fortunately, President Bush has not been schooled in Washington's foreign-affairs establishment. His instincts, which produced in the Axis of Evil speech the clearest and most intellectually potent foreign policy since Ronald Reagan's, don't please the diplomats and intelligence professionals, who remain acutely uncomfortable with good-versus-evil as a roadmap for American action abroad. The president's instincts may propel him to pop the myth that America must solicit an Arab coalition to defeat Saddam Hussein. Untutored, the president may just ask: Why would America need Muslim or Arab cover for

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military action against Iraq? What moral sanction can dictatorial regimes in Egypt and Saudi Arabia possibly give us? What real aid can they give to the war on terrorism if they cannot call suicide bombers terrorists? Is the average Arab who hates us, for whatever reasons, going to hate us less because his rulers tell him to?

In World War I, the British had to confront an Ottoman sultan who declared a holy war against them. Recognized by millions of Muslims as both sultan and caliph, "the commander of the faithful," the Ottoman monarch and his warlords hoped they could rouse the faithful of the British Raj, where thousands of Muslims served as soldiers under the Union Jack. Some in the Foreign Office were deeply concerned. Faithful Arabs, of course, never arose en masse, though most stayed quietly loyal to the Sublime Porte. The Hashemites from Arabia—soon to be the guardians of Islam's holy cities of Mecca and Medina—however, put their fingers in the air and determined that the British Empire was going to crush the Ottoman. Being allied with a victorious infidel seemed far better than being the brother of a loser.

The Bush administration ought to reflect on the Hashemite example when voices from within and critics from without suggest that America—vastly stronger than the British Empire in 1914—somehow requires the spiritual or logistical assistance of Arabian princes for a war against the ruler of Baghdad or a war against terror. They ought to seriously question the intentions of "moderate" Arab dictators who suggest that their regimes might be in danger because of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. No pro-American dictator went down in the Arab world in 1982. Broadcasting against the Israeli forces in the West Bank, and perhaps soon against American forces in Iraq, the Al Jazeera satellite television channel, which some say has completely reworked the popular dynamics and politics of the Middle East, will likely in the long term do the opposite of what its producers and reporters intend, by showing the hopelessness of opposing American power.

As Al Jazeera unintentionally served America's interests in the war against the Taliban and al Qaeda in Afghanistan, it will do so again if the Bush administration remains firm in its resolve. President Bush's moral clarity on terrorism, tyranny, and weapons of mass destruction is the best hope the Arab world has for rescuing itself from the moral abyss of suicide bombers and public sympathy for a totalitarian regime that rules through rape. The president, more so than any since Reagan, has become the prime mover of history. In the next few months, we'll all see where he leads us. In the meantime, Ariel Sharon, bellicose brute that he may be, has done America a significant favor by having the guts to send the IDF back to the West Bank, where neither he nor his army wanted to go. ♦

Bush Stands with Israel

And against the State Department.

BY FRED BARNES

PRESIDENT BUSH has trouble concealing his sympathy for Israel. When White House aides suggested Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz as Bush's personal representative to address the pro-Israel rally in Washington on April 15, the president responded without hesitation. He could have had a low-level official from the State Department or the National Security Council or the White House staff speak at the event, someone with less of a reputation as a firm supporter of Israel, someone who'd signal friendship with Israel but not strong backing in the current fighting with Palestinians, someone whose presence wouldn't upset Europeans and Arabs. Bush didn't ask for another option. "Yeah," he told his aides about sending Wolfowitz, "that's the guy that ought to do it."

This was hardly an isolated episode. Some of the president's pro-Israel utterances are well known, notably his comment after Secretary of State Colin Powell returned from his trip to the Middle East that Israeli prime minister Ariel Sharon is a "man of peace." Other comments have escaped media attention. Example: Bush's private remark to Jewish leaders last year about his disdain for State Department diplomats with anti-Israel leanings. Vice President Dick Cheney echoes Bush. In a little-noticed speech last week at the Israeli embassy—it was Israel's independence day—he said Israel's battle against terrorists is the same as America's war on terrorism. Cheney cited Israeli support for America's war and added, "Israelis have lived at the front lines of *this* struggle for decades."

Bush's sharpest prodding of Israel came on April 8 after he had toured a citizens' police academy in Knoxville, Tennessee. Reporters were summoned for what White House press aides said would be a "statement." The president appeared peeved. He punctuated his comments with a slashing hand movement. "Let me say one thing before I leave," he said. "First of all, I meant what I said to the prime minister of Israel. I expect there to be a withdrawal [by

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Israeli soldiers from the West Bank] without delay. . . . I repeat. I meant what I said about withdrawal without delay."

For sure, that wasn't a pro-Israel moment. But what followed was. When the president returned to Washington, he was informed Israeli troops had been pulling out of two small Palestinian towns. That was enough for him to change his tune. Interviewed late that afternoon by the *Wall Street Journal*, Bush refused to zing Sharon for declaring Israel would finish the job of rooting out terrorists in the West Bank. "I can just tell you they started pulling out of cities," Bush said. Are there consequences for Israel if the pullout doesn't continue? "It's going to continue," he said.

For the next eight days, the president was silent on the subject of Israel's need to retreat hastily—no words, no arm-twisting. Of course, Bush could have exerted enormous pressure on Israel. He or an administration official could have raised the possibility of a "reassessment" of Middle East policy, a tactic used by President Ford in the mid-1970s. Leaks about potential cuts in aid to Israel could have been engineered. Or a State Department official could have suggested the United States could do nothing to stop Europeans from imposing trade or economic sanctions against Israel. None of this happened.

What can we draw from this? At the very least, Bush didn't feel strongly about stopping Israel from completing its anti-terrorist drive in the West Bank. Rather, he seemed quite happy to see it continue, so long as Sharon was beginning a gradual pullout and thus allowing Bush to claim credit. As for Powell's mission to the Middle East, the White House announced he had maximum flexibility to decide what to do. As luck would have it, he decided as Bush would have. Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat expected Powell to spring him from his headquarters in Ramallah, where the Israelis were keeping him. Powell didn't. Nor did he free the Palestinian fighters besieged in the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem, as the fighters had expected he would. Naturally, the press called Powell's trip a failure because a cease-fire, requiring Israeli troops to quit the West Bank, wasn't reached. But from Bush's pro-Israel standpoint, things worked out fine.

Getty

Paul Wolfowitz addressing the pro-Israel rally on the Mall

At the outset, however, Bush faced rising anger among Republicans and conservatives—his political base—over his refusal to call Arafat a terrorist and his insistence Israel halt its incursion. One GOP congressional leader told the White House he was hard-pressed to keep Republicans from attacking the Bush policy. He was informed that Bush hadn't meant to sound so harsh with his "I meant what I said" statement. By the end of Powell's trip, the anger had dissipated. "It played out substantially differently from what people thought," the Republican leader said. "We're back to giving Bush the benefit of the doubt." Bush adviser Karl Rove, by the way, says the White House was never concerned about a revolt by pro-Israel Republicans. "We don't hyperventilate around here," he says.

By declining to label Arafat a terrorist, Bush sacrificed moral clarity in his war on terrorism. True, following Powell's trip he said Arafat must "not only" denounce terrorism but actually stop it from being carried out by Palestinians. That's not quite the same as writing Arafat off as a terrorist. There was a reason for the president's hesitancy: Iraq. His aim is to stop the fighting in the Middle East, cool tensions, assuage Arab leaders, and begin some sort of peace process to preoccupy the region. In Bush's view, Arafat's involvement is necessary, for now anyway. All this would clear the way for the Bush administration to move ahead with plans for deposing Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein. That remains Bush's top priority, so much so he broached the subject last week in a talk ("I've got one country in mind") to the Fiscal Responsibility Coalition, which isn't a foreign policy group.

The Wolfowitz speech at the pro-Israel rally at the Capitol also got priority treatment at the White House. It was drafted at the Pentagon by the entire speechwriting staff and rewritten by Wolfowitz himself. Then it was vetted by White House aides, though Bush didn't read it. Wolfowitz was booed when he lamented the suffering of innocent Palestinians, a part of the speech he had inserted. Except for that, he was well received, especially by Elie Wiesel, the writer and Holocaust survivor. As he left the stage following his speech, Wolfowitz was waylaid by Wiesel. In reporting back to White House aides, Wolfowitz quoted Wiesel as saying: "I listened to every word you said. I agreed with it. It's important you said it." Bush's aides were relieved. ♦

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The International Kangaroo Court

Get ready for the International Criminal Court to go after Israelis and Americans. BY JEREMY RABKIN

IN THE MIDDLE EAST, reality intrudes rather quickly. The dreams of diplomats are regularly blown to pieces by bombings and bullets. Elsewhere, reality sometimes takes longer to penetrate. This is especially so in the European Union, which has now displaced U.N. headquarters as the global center of political fantasy.

Puffed with their own moral authority, the Europeans have now corralled enough confused or calculating client states to reach the required 60 ratifications of the Rome Statute for the International Criminal Court. The court will open for business in July.

As a tool of law enforcement, the ICC is absurd. If a country wants to punish its own war criminals, it can do so. If it wants to protect them now, it still can—because the ICC has no way of enforcing its subpoenas. Will it do any good for the ICC to indict Osama bin Laden or Saddam Hussein? They are a bit beyond the power of European public opinion, even if it were running strongly against them (which it isn't).

The main point of the permanent criminal tribunal is to establish a platform for political spectacle. From the Euro perspective, it has two advantages over the Security Council. First, the ICC is not subject to a U.S. veto. Second, action by the ICC requires no direct involvement by European governments. Ostensibly, all decisions will be made by an independent prosecutor.

But the prosecutor will be based in Europe (at The Hague, in the Netherlands). The prosecutor will be financed by European states and given credibility and prestige by the approving comments of European leaders. So guess who the prosecutor will put in his sights as he tries to prove his value to his European sponsors?

Put it this way. Suppose a public gallows had been erected in a prominent place in a German town in 1941. Or suppose a gallows had been erected in a town square by the Nazi collaborationist governments of that era in France, Belgium, or Italy. Who do you think they would have chosen to hang?

Of course, that was long ago. Today, when synagogues are being burned in Europe, government leaders insist such events have nothing to do with government policy. But they also say the way to calm angry passions in Europe is to find a "solution" to the Israeli-Palestinian dispute, thereby endorsing the premise that Jews are, after all, somewhat to blame for violence against them. Germany was, in fact, the first to impose sanctions on Israel, followed quickly by France. The European Parliament then voted, by a substantial margin, to impose wider economic sanctions.

We don't need to rest on speculation about where the trend is heading. There has already been a dry run. Embarrassed at pulling their own troops from Rwanda in 1994, leaving 800,000 Tutsis to be slaughtered, the Belgians gave their courts "universal jurisdiction" to try any perpetrator, anywhere, of a "crime against humanity." The first foreign leader to be subject to this process (and so far the only one) is Ariel Sharon—because, in 1982, he allowed 800 refugees to be killed by Christian militias when he *should have known* this would happen.

Not one government in Europe has protested this attempted prosecution. Not one government in Europe has pointed out how untimely it might seem at a moment when Europeans are offering themselves as diplomatic "partners" in negotiating a Mideast peace.

Why is there so much hostility to Israel among European leaders? Leftist fashion plays some role, as do geopolitical strategies. But the hostility to Israel is so visceral that it must have deeper roots. At bottom, I think, Euro leaders resent Israel because it is everything the European Union is not.

Israel is a democracy. The European Union would never allow anyone as crude as Ariel Sharon to be elected to a top position, because no official with any authority in the EU is actually elected by European voters. The so-called Parliament of Europe is a place for summoning moral authority with nonbinding resolutions of impotent fury (like the threatened economic sanctions against Israel).

Then, too, Israel is a nation that is organized to defend itself and has shown the will to do so. Euroland is organized to project moral authority, and people who rely on its military protection—like the hapless refugees of Srebrenica or the Tutsis of Rwanda—have a way of ending up massacred. Still, Europeans wonder why Israel thinks it's so special that it has to insist on defending itself with its own troops. It should accept a force of "international peacekeepers," the Europeans say. Haven't these Euro forces done well in the past?

Finally, Israel is a nation with a strong sense of national identity, preserved by the historical memory of its people. In Germany—rather, in the largest member state of the European Union—history is something that began very recently, which is why that country is regarded so warmly by all its neighbors. Why do Israelis

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keep bringing up what Arafat did or didn't do way back in the past—before he renounced terrorism, or before he did so most recently?

Israel won't be the only target for Euro resentment, though. The United States is also a democracy, also a nation organized to defend itself and willing to do so, also a nation with a strong sense of its own national history and identity. And the United States also very much annoys Europeans. Europeans were in a frenzy of moral outrage when it became known that the United States was actually detaining al Qaeda prisoners at Guantanamo without according them all the privileges of POW status. And French prosecutors want to question Henry Kissinger in connection with possible war crimes 30 years ago.

Now American planners are thinking about war against Iraq, perhaps as soon as next fall. Will American military strikes involve "excessive" force, and so constitute war crimes? Will the resort to war itself be a criminal act of "aggression"? The independent ICC prosecutor will be on duty by then to tell us.

We can't now say for sure what will happen at The Hague. For example, we can't know for sure whether the first indictments of Israelis will come down in July or August. We can't know whether Americans will be indicted as early as September or only in November. But we know the court will be a major disappointment to its sponsors if it has not produced some resounding indictments by Christmas.

Is the United States prepared for this? Do we have a policy? Will Secretary Powell get Kofi Annan to stand in as a character witness for his good intentions when Powell is hauled before the prosecutor for questioning? Might it be worthwhile to think about this before it happens so we have some serious plans ready? Might it even be advantageous to announce our position in advance, before it gets tangled up in disputed facts about what our first indicted officer actually did or didn't do? Might we want to say something before Secretary Powell has to respond, impromptu, when the first Israeli is indicted?

So far the Bush White House has not even figured out whether to register our disapproval by withdrawing Bill Clinton's signature on the Rome treaty. Probably it's too late to tell the Euros that if they are not with us, they are against us. But perhaps we could tell them that if they indict one of our nationals, then we really will know they are against us.

Then we need to make clear that we'll take the same hostile view of any state or postmodern "union" of states that harbors the international prosecutors who indict our people. Perhaps we can mention that we regard such indictments as tantamount to unprovoked aggression. We might even tell the Euros that we wouldn't blame other democratic nations with war-making ability for defending themselves in the same way.

But we really must say something, and very soon. ♦

"I'M RUNNING..."

Michael Ramirez

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Osama's Brain

Meet Sayyid Qutb, intellectual father of the anti-Western jihad. BY DINESH D'SOUZA

BEHIND THE PHYSICAL ATTACK on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon was an intellectual attack—an assault not just on American foreign policy but on the principle of freedom. So far the Bush administration's military response has been quite effective against the al Qaeda network. But our intellectual response has been weak. This matters, because ultimately it is not enough to shut down the terrorist camps. We also must stop the "jihad factories," the mosques and educational institutions that are turning out tens of thousands of aspiring suicide bombers and martyrs. We cannot kill all these people; we have to change their minds. So far, however, America is making few converts in the Muslim world.

Part of the problem is that Americans were too quick to dismiss the terrorists as craven, insane, or misinformed. The truth, however, is that the hijackers were not cowards any more than the Japanese kamikazes were cowards. And on September 11, they performed an act requiring considerable coordination and technical sophistication. Moreover, our assailants were people who had lived in the West and been exposed to the West. In some respects, they understood us all too well.

If one wants to penetrate the mindset that produced their actions, a good place to begin is with the work of the most influential thinker of fundamentalist Islam, Sayyid Qutb. A theoretician for the Muslim Brotherhood, Qutb was executed in Egypt in 1966. Since then, his works have gained in popularity, so that he is now considered the most effective Islamic critic of the West and the most eloquent advocate of pan-Islamic revival. Pupils of his assassinated Anwar Sadat in 1981. The blind sheikh Omar Abdel Rahman, now in prison in the United States for conspiracy to commit terrorism, is also a disciple. The leaders of many of the major terrorist groups—such as Hamas and Islamic Jihad—regularly cite his works. His influence is so pervasive in the bin Laden circle that he has been called "the brains behind Osama."

Sayyid Qutb was born in the Egyptian village of Musha in 1906. As a child he was something of a prodigy; by the age of 10 he had memorized the entire Koran. He became a teacher, and was soon appointed to the Egyptian Ministry of Education. His early writings included poetry, novels, and literary criticism. He became friends with the Egyptian literary figure Taha Husain, whose cosmopolitan and pro-Western outlook he initially shared.

During his tenure at the Ministry of Education, Qutb established a reputation as a critic of corruption and an advocate of an Islamic society free of nepotism, tyranny, and foreign control. In 1948, the Egyptian government sent him on a mission to America, "doubtless with the assumption that direct acquaintance with America would incline him more favorably to official policies," in the words of his English translator, the Islamic scholar Hamid Algar. Qutb stayed three years in America, studied in Washington, D.C., California, and Colorado, and completed a master's degree in education at the University of Northern Colorado. By this time, he had come to hate the United States, and decided not to pursue a doctorate here.

On returning to Egypt in 1951, Qutb broke with the pro-Western Taha Husain circle and began a long association with the Muslim Brotherhood, a group founded by Hasan al-Banna in 1928 to unify the Muslim world and strengthen Islamic influence over all aspects of society. Qutb began writing for the publications of the Brotherhood, and was appointed editor of its official journal, *al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun*. He also published several books, including his best-known work, *Social Justice in Islam*.

Qutb's rising influence as a champion of Islamic revival and an advocate of radicalism brought him into conflict with Gamal Abdel Nasser, who had seized power in Egypt in 1952. Although Nasser was no less anti-Western than Qutb and initially admired him and reportedly attended some of his lectures, the two had different outlooks. Nasser was an Arab nationalist, Qutb a pan-Islamic revivalist who held that "a Muslim has no nationality except his belief." Qutb and the Muslim Brotherhood criticized Nasser for putting personal and national interests above the interests of Islam. After failing to co-opt Qutb by offering him a cabinet position, Nasser outlawed the Muslim Brotherhood and put Qutb in jail.

Qutb spent the next several years in and out of prison. He was routinely beaten and tortured, and eventually he was convicted of inciting sedition and terrorism (admittedly under procedures far short of a fair trial) and hanged in Cairo together with two friends. Yet Qutb's prison period was his most productive. He published *Milestones*, a short account of his vision of an Islamic society, and *In the Shade of the Quran*, "the most widely read modern commentary" on the Koran, according to Hamid Algar. Through his writings, Qutb helped his political cause prevail over Nasser's. In recent decades, Arab nationalism has faded, and Islamic fundamentalism has become the power to be reckoned with in the Muslim world.

What, then, did Sayyid Qutb believe? A good place to begin is with

Dinesh D'Souza's book What's So Great About America *has just been published by Regnery. He is the Rishwain Research Fellow at the Hoover Institution.*

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his account of this country in *The America That I Saw*. While he was impressed with the productivity and technological efficiency of America, he was shocked by what he deemed its rampant racism, especially toward people of Arab descent, its materialism, and the sexual promiscuity of its women. Even the church, Qutb commented, had become a place of amusement and social interaction rather than worship. Qutb concluded that America was materially prosperous but morally rotten. The Muslim believer, he wrote, has no reason to envy American society; rather, he should feel contempt for it. "The believer from his height looks down at the people drowning in dirt and mud."

To explain America's decadence, Qutb argued that from its earliest days Western civilization had separated God and society. Long before the American doctrine of separation of church and state, the institutions of religion and those of government operated in separate realms and commanded separate allegiances. Consequently, God and society were bound to come into conflict. And this, Qutb pointed out, is precisely what happened in the West. If Athens represents reason and science, and Jerusalem represents God and religion, then Athens has been in constant struggle with Jerusalem. Now the terrible truth is that Athens has won. Reason and science have annihilated religion. True, many people continue to profess Christianity, but religion has ceased to shape society. It does not direct government or law or scientific research or culture. In short, a once-religious civilization has been reduced to *jahiliyya*—the condition of social chaos, moral diversity, sexual permissiveness, polytheism, unbelief, and idolatry that was said to characterize the Bedouin tribes before the advent of Islam.

Qutb's alternative to this way of life is Islam, "an unparalleled revolution in human thinking" that provides the only solution to "this unhappy, perplexed, and weary world." Islamic societies may be poor, he admitted, but at least they are trying to implement the will of God.

In his book *Social Justice in Islam*, Qutb told the story of a man and woman who came to the prophet Muhammad and said, "Messenger of Allah, purify us." Muhammad asked, "From what am I to purify you?" They replied, "From adultery." Muhammad asked whether the couple was mad or drunk. Assured that they were not, Muhammad asked them again, "What have you done?" And they said they had committed adultery. Then Muhammad gave the order, and they were stoned to death. While the couple were being buried, onlookers scorned them, but Muhammad chided the scoffers. The couple had repented, he said, and now they were with Allah.

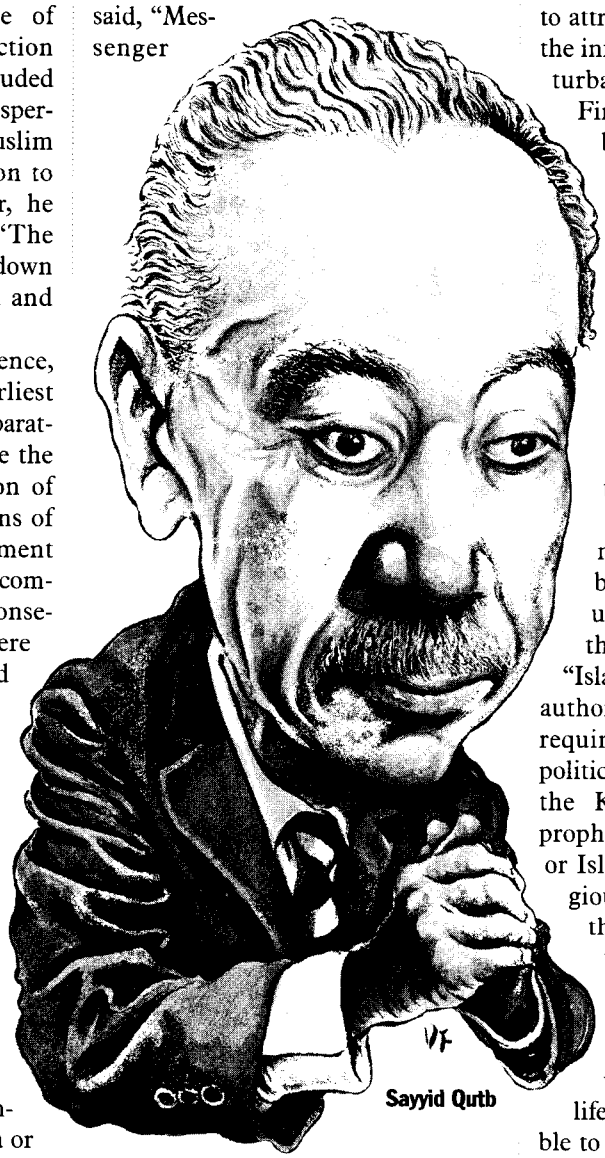
Sayyid Qutb

Illustration by Drew Friedman

"This is Islam," Qutb wrote. Analyzing the incident, he pointed out that no one had witnessed the adultery, and the prophet initially sought to attribute the couple's confession to the influence of alcohol or mental disturbance. Still, they had persisted. Finally Muhammad had no choice but to have them stoned in accordance with God's law. Qutb posed an interesting question: Why did the couple demand to be stoned? His answer: "It was the desire to be purified of a crime of which none save Allah was cognizant. It was the shame of meeting Allah unpurified from a sin which they had committed."

Islam, Qutb emphasizes, is not merely a moral code or set of beliefs; it is a way of life based upon the divine government of the universe. The very term "Islam" means "submission" to the authority of Allah. This worldview requires that religious, economic, political, and civil society be based on the Koran, the teachings of the prophet Muhammad, and the *sharia*, or Islamic law. Islam regulates religious belief and practice, but also the administration of the state, the conduct of war, the making of treaties, divorce and inheritance, property rights and contracts. In short, Islam provides the whole framework of life, and in this sense it is impossible to "practice" Islam within a secular milieu.

This is especially true in the West, whose institutions are antithetical to Islam. In Qutb's view, Western society is based on freedom, while Islamic society is based on virtue. Moreover, Qutb argued that Western institutions are fundamentally atheist, based on a clear rejection of divine authority. When democrats say that sovereignty flows from the people, this means that

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the people—not God—are the rulers. So democracy is a form of idol-worship, just as capitalism is a form of market-worship. Qutb contended that since the West and Islam are based on radically different principles, there is no way that Islamic society can compromise or meet the West halfway. Either the West will prevail or Islam will prevail.

Qutb rejected the view of those Muslims who say that Islamic countries should embrace capitalism and democracy and follow the ways of the West. That, he writes, would assure Muslims a place "at the tail of the caravan." Instead, Qutb reminded Muslims that the Koran promises prosperity in this world and paradise in the next world to those who follow the teachings of Allah. The problem, he contended, is that Muslims have fallen away from their faith. Qutb argued that only by purging Western influences and returning to true Islam can the Muslim world recover its glory.

Qutb's work concludes with a resounding call to true-believing Muslims to stand up for Islam against the Western infidel and against those apostate Muslims who have sold out to the West for money and power. Many of his followers have interpreted his work as a call to jihad. Kill the apostates. Kill the infidels. Qutb's writing stops short of advocating violence, but his long association with the Muslim Brotherhood would suggest that he approved of terrorism.

Today, we need to take Qutb's views seriously for two reasons: because they are taken seriously in the Islamic world, with which we must find ways to communicate; and because, for all his vehemence, Qutb raises a fundamental challenge. For Qutb, Western prosperity, pluralism, and equality of the sexes are as nothing, worthless. The true Islamic society is superior to Western society because it makes virtue as laid down by the Koran the chief end of government. To counter this idea will require a full-bodied defense of freedom as understood in the West, as a gift from God and a necessary precondition for true virtue. ♦

Iran Hates Iraq . . .

But don't count on Tehran to help against Saddam. BY A. WILLIAM SAMII

IF THE UNITED STATES moves against Iraq, what attitude should it expect from neighboring Iran? Unfortunately, given improvements in Tehran-Baghdad relations, the considerable influence Tehran exerts over Iraqi opposition groups, and continuing poor relations between Tehran and Washington, the United States shouldn't count on Iran's adopting a helpful stance.

During Operation Enduring Freedom, the U.S. action in Afghanistan, Washington could not ignore Iran, which had helped create and continued to back the opposition to the Taliban, notably the Northern Alliance. Tehran is closely involved, too, with the opposition to Saddam Hussein.

Iran hosts the Shiite-dominated Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI) and the Shiite al-Dawa group. The Iraqi National Congress (INC), the democratic umbrella group, claims to have training facilities in Tehran. Tehran also is connected with the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) and the Islamic Movement of Kurdistan, and it maintains relations with the Kurdistan Democratic party (KDP) of Massoud Barzani. In fact, it was reported in January that the Iranian Foreign Ministry had organized, and cancelled at the last minute, a meeting in Tehran of the KDP, PUK, SCIRI, INC, and prominent Iraqi defector General Wafiq al-Samarrai.

Baghdad returns the favor by supporting the Iranian opposition group Mujahedeen Khalq Organization (the MKO, recognized as a terrorist organization by the State Department). Nevertheless, relations between Iran and Iraq have improved since their bloody 1980-88 war. Two Iraqi cabinet members visited Tehran this winter, and in late February, Saddam Hussein cabled his congratulations to Iranian president Mohammad Khatami on the anniversary of the Iranian revolution. The two sides have made progress on outstanding war-related issues such as POWs and MIAs, too. And they have adopted similar positions regarding the current Palestinian uprising.

Yet differences remain. In April, when Baghdad called for an oil embargo, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, Iran's top political and religious official, urged all Islamic countries to suspend their oil exports to the United States for one month and donate part of the month's oil revenues to the Palestinians. Baghdad actually suspended U.S. sales, and in two televised speeches, Saddam Hussein complained about Tehran's failure to follow suit. He used the opportunity to raise again a longstanding sore point: Iran's failure to return the 140 Iraqi warplanes and civilian planes flown to Iran during the 1991 Gulf War. Iran claims only 22 of the planes landed, and they will not be returned without the U.N.'s approval.

More relevant to the issue of regime change in Iraq are some recent activities of the opposition to Saddam, notably meetings in Tehran between Kurdish and Shiite-dominated groups. Jalal Talabani of the PUK met with Ayatollah Mohammed Baqer al-Hakim of the SCIRI in Tehran in early February, and the following month al-Hakim said that the SCIRI and the Kurds together could change the Iraqi regime. Press reports from London in mid-March described frequent meetings between the SCIRI, the

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PUK, the KDP, and the Iraqi National Accord, as well as groups representing small minorities like the Turkmen and the Assyrians.

The SCIRI leadership often has expressed misgivings about an American role in replacing Saddam. These may reflect bad memories from 1991, when the Shiite uprising in southern Iraq received no help from the United States, or they could simply be another manifestation of Iranian hostility towards the United States. The Tehran-backed opposition may also be wary of the increasingly prominent role played by Iraqi military defectors, some of whom fought in the Iran-Iraq War or were involved in poison gas attacks against Iranians and Kurds during that conflict and afterwards.

But the main reason the United States shouldn't count on Iranian help if it overthrows Saddam is that Tehran is highly suspicious of U.S. intentions in the region. Iranian government officials oppose the presence of any foreign forces in the area and frequently complain about "U.S. encirclement." U.S. troops in Georgia are one cause for concern. Another is the U.S. presence in Afghanistan. As General Yahya Rahim Safavi, commander of the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps, said on Iranian television in January, "America is attempting to loot energy resources, to export its products and facilities to the region, and to transform these regions into its consumer markets." Deputy Commander of the Guards Mohammad Zolqadr warned that one of America's objectives in Afghanistan is to "build bases . . . to spy on Iran and conduct their plots against the Islamic Republic."

Tehran and Washington, of course, have had no diplomatic relations for some 20 years, and Iran's top leader recently dismissed the possibility of talks. Responding to Senator Joseph Biden's offer in March to meet with Iranian lawmakers at a place of their choosing, Ayatollah Khamenei said, "What kind of dialogue can be held with the side which does not even accept you at all, with the side which is against your existence as the Islamic Republic?" President Bush's naming Iran as part of the "axis of evil" had clearly registered with Khamenei. He saw Biden's message as: "If we do not wish to be attacked, we should become a dependent and a puppet regime, and that is impossible."

The Iranian political elite is not united on the wisdom of the country's estrangement from the United States. Some members of parliament reacted to their country's inclusion in the axis of evil by demanding an investigation of Iran's role in the shipment of arms to the Palestinian Authority and of its sheltering of al Qaeda personnel. And although Ayatollah Khamenei rejected Biden's overture, a spokesman for President Khatami's government had said that it was up to members of parliament to decide whether they would meet with their American counterparts. Committees were formed to discuss this very idea.

The Iranian political elite is not united on the wisdom of the country's estrangement from the United States. Some members of parliament demanded an investigation of Iran's role in the shipment of arms to the Palestinians.

What seems to have closed off a possible Iranian opening to the United States in recent weeks is the Middle East crisis. Khamenei said in a sermon on April 5, "If America had not approved, if it had not given a green light, if it had not promised support, the Israelis would not have dared to do these things. . . . America is, therefore, a party to all the crimes being committed in Palestine today." President Khatami, furthermore, said on April 15, "The American administration's support for and satisfaction regarding Israel's unprecedented, inhuman crimes has removed the last shred of doubt, even in the most optimistic individuals and organizations, about America's neutrality." On April 9, the entire parliament attended a rally at the Palestinian embassy in Tehran.

For all its tough talk and unacceptable behavior, the Iranian government is capable of being pragmatic. Iranian diplomats were involved in multilateral discussions of Afghanistan through the U.N.'s "six plus two" group, made up of Afghanistan's immediate neighbors plus the United States and Russia. And State Department officials credited Tehran with a constructive role in the discussions in Bonn in November 2001 that created the interim administration of Hamid Karzai. During the fighting, Tehran offered to rescue downed U.S. aviators, and Iranian and American special operations forces occasionally bumped into each other as they advised local combatants. Finally, Tehran facilitated the international community's provision of aid to Afghans displaced by the fighting, though it sealed its borders to new refugees.

Supreme Leader Khamenei has the final say in all matters of state, and the lack of transparency in the decision-making process makes it hard to predict exactly what policy he will adopt if the United States seeks assistance in a conflict with Iraq. Moreover, the institutions with a role in Iranian foreign policy—the Foreign Ministry, the Intelligence Ministry, the Revolutionary Guards, and the armed forces—have conflicting agendas. Given the further variables of Tehran's bilateral relations with Baghdad and Washington, however, as well as the fractiousness of the Iraqi opposition, it seems unlikely that the same cooperation Iran offered during Operation Enduring Freedom will be forthcoming this time. ♦

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How Come We're Not on TV More?

The ludicrous complaint of Daschle and Gephardt. BY SAM DEALEY

HERE'S A GOOD ONE: Liberals are now whining about media bias.

It took the form of an April 12 letter to the heads of CNN, Fox News, and MSNBC. "We are writing to bring to your attention an issue that has become more pronounced in recent months: the lack of television coverage of press events featuring elected leaders of the Democratic Party," wrote Tom Daschle, the Senate's top Democrat, and Dick Gephardt, the party's top man in the House. "Both of us are hopeful that you will take a closer look at your coverage of live press events and attempt to strike a balance."

Explains Erik Smith, a spokesman for Gephardt: "The issue here is not that they're covering Bush too much on the war on terrorism. The issue is not that we should be getting 50-50 coverage. Both of those are unrealistic." But, he continues, "the White House is getting coverage of lots of events that have nothing to do with the war on terrorism, and there are lots of events on the war on terrorism on the Hill that Democrats are doing."

To back up these charges, Smith says the leaders "commissioned" a "study" from the Democratic National Committee on CNN's coverage. Pie charts and spreadsheets aside, this turns out to be fancy talk for having some low-level staffer slave away at a computer querying the Nexis news database.

According to this research, from January 1 to March 21, CNN's cameras cut to Bush administration events 157 times, and to congressional Democratic events only 7 times. Why pick on CNN, once nicknamed the Clinton News Network by conservatives? They're the only network that posts all of their live-event specials to Nexis, Smith says. But as Daschle and Gephardt note, "anecdotal evidence indicates that Fox News and MSNBC coverage follows the same pattern"—which might have been another clue that something other than bias was at work here.

Here is the larger idiocy of the Daschle/Gephardt letter: It assumes that any media coverage is good coverage.

With some spare time on my hands, I "commissioned" my own study. What it found, after exhaustive tapping at my keyboard, was that the DNC's data are sound, but its interpretation less so.

The charge that CNN "often" covered live White House events on domestic issues, for instance, is wrong. Of the 157 administration events, just 28 (or 17.8 percent, if you want to sound scientific) did not include substantial comment on war-related issues. So what were they about?

Here we approach the larger idiocy of the Daschle/Gephardt letter: It assumes that any coverage is good coverage. But those 28 "domestic" events from the White House were hardly triumphs. There were briefings dominated by the Bush administration's cozy ties to Enron, for example. And then there were events touting Ted Kennedy's education bill, the Freedom Corps, high steel tariffs, and campaign finance reform—events which, frankly, many Republicans and most conservatives would just as soon have had the TV cameras ignore. Smith unwittingly concedes this point when he gripes, "Certainly when Gary Condit was being pursued they found ample time to put our [Democratic] events on cable networks."

Furthermore, while Daschle has been busy, his efforts have largely been behind the scenes, designed to keep issues from coming to the Senate floor and to confine real debates to private offices where not even the C-SPAN cameras reach. Witness, for example, the scuttling of Charles Pickering's nomination to a federal appeals bench by the Senate Judiciary Committee without a floor vote. Then, too, Daschle resisted bringing up contentious issues such as trade-promotion authority, taxation, and energy.

And that's when he's in town. Of the 80 days covered in the DNC study, the Senate convened on just 37. Votes took place on just 26 days, and seven of those don't even really count. There were four Mondays on which the first votes were easy ones cast after 5:30 P.M.; and three Fridays on which the last votes were cast before 10 A.M.

In fact, during this time period, the Senate acted on just two bills—a larded farm bill and campaign finance reform. So it shouldn't come as a surprise that Tom Daschle, the Senate majority leader, didn't get much TV time.

And while Democratic leaders were covered at seven events, Republican congressional leaders weren't covered by CNN at all. Perhaps Trent Lott and Dennis Hastert should write a letter complaining, too. ♦

Sam Dealey is managing editor of The International Economy, *a Washington-based quarterly.*

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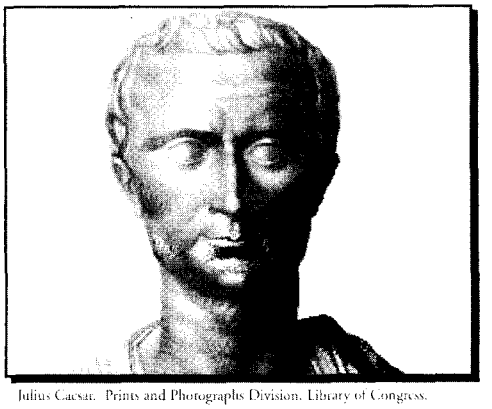

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GARRETT G. FAGAN (Ph.D., McMaster University, 1993) is associate professor of history at the Pennsylvania State University in State College. A native of Dublin, Ireland, he earned his bachelor's and master's degrees at Trinity College, Dublin, and was a Killam Postdoctoral Fellow at the University of British Columbia. Before joining the faculty at Penn State, he held teaching posts at McMaster University and York University in Canada, and at the University of North Carolina–Chapel Hill and Davidson College. Students at every institution consistently offered high praise for his courses in ancient history.

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Remember Anthrax?

The FBI seems to have no idea who sent it, but won't let go of its "lone American" theory.

By David Tell

1 Over the past six months, have federal authorities altered their working theory of last fall's anthrax murders?

No, not much. On November 9 last year, even before the anthrax outbreak's fifth and final fatality had been recorded, the FBI called a press conference to unveil its "linguistic and behavioral assessment" of "the person" purportedly responsible. It was "highly probable, bordering on certainty," the Bureau announced, that a single "adult male" had prepared and mailed all the contaminated letters at issue. This man "probably has a scientific background," "may work in a laboratory," and is familiar with the area around Trenton, New Jersey—where the envelopes were postmarked. He suffers a pronounced psycho-social deformity: "He lacks the personal skills necessary to confront others" and "if he is involved in a personal relationship, it will likely be of a self-serving nature." Moreover, crucially, the suspect appears to be an American. "We're certainly looking in that direction right now, as far as someone being domestic," said James R. Fitzgerald, head of the FBI's Behavioral Analysis Unit.

By the end of November, after an unopened anthrax letter addressed to Sen. Patrick Leahy was found in sequestered congressional mail, investigators were telling reporters on background that they might well be dealing with someone who has a particular animus against Democrats. His politics aside, the man's citizenship, at least, achieved a measure of official status by mid-December, when homeland security chief Tom Ridge, seconded by White House spokesman Ari Fleischer, acknowledged that where once "some of us" had been "thinking more in terms of foreign sources," now "a lot of the information and a lot of the things they've been able to detect from the investigation and follow-up leads . . . they're looking more inward to a domestic source."

On January 29, confirming its impression of the domestic source's professional profile, the FBI sent a letter to all 40,000 members of the American Society for Microbiology which informed those scientists that it is "likely one or more of you know this individual." On February 26, the *New York Times* reported that what had once been a "pretty tight list" of investigative subjects in the world of microbiology—perhaps 100 U.S. laboratories and their employees—had been whittled down to a group of 35 to 50 "researchers or technicians" and then narrowed still further to maybe 18 or 20 people with the means and potential motive to send deadly bacteria through the mail.

Two weeks ago, numerous published reports suggested that the FBI has recently lost a fair bit of confidence in the focus of its investigation; the universe of potential suspects, "law enforcement sources" now say, actually numbers in the "thousands." Nevertheless, the government continues to expect that the one guilty man among those thousands will turn out to be an American biological researcher of some kind.

2 What makes them think he's an American?

The FBI has declined to explain its profiling rationale in any detail, and Tom Ridge's references to "follow-up leads" and other "things they've been able to detect" remain ambiguous. But a woman named Barbara Hatch Rosenberg, whom the Bureau has consulted, and whose analysis of the case mirrors its own in certain key respects, has tirelessly publicized the results of some ambitious amateur detective work.

Rosenberg is a research professor of environmental science at the State University of New York in Purchase. She also directs a working group on biological weapons verification for the Federation of American Scientists. And in a running "commentary" she has maintained on the federa-

David Tell is opinion editor of The Weekly Standard.

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tion's Internet site (*www.fas.org/bwc/news/anthraxreport.htm*), Rosenberg argues that "multiple, blatant clues" left "seemingly on purpose" all make clear that "the perpetrator of the anthrax attacks is American." First off, the letters in which his spores were wrapped warned recipients to take an antibiotic, establishing that he "did not aim to kill"—as would be the goal of a genuine al Qaeda operative—but sought simply "to create public fear." Furthermore, according to Rosenberg, the spores themselves were prepared following the "optimal U.S. process" secretly perfected decades ago by Army biowarfare specialists at Ft. Detrick in Frederick, Maryland. "The anthrax in the letters," Rosenberg flatly asserts, "was either made and weaponized in recent years in a U.S. government or contractor lab for biodefense purposes, or by the perpetrator on his own." Either way, last fall's bacteriological terrorism against the United States was undoubtedly "an inside job."

Given the understandably intense jealousy with which federal investigators have guarded whatever hard evidence they themselves have accumulated in the case, media attempts to substantiate the FBI's conviction that a deranged current or former government scientist is behind the anthrax attacks have necessarily been based almost exclusively on the speculation of outside "experts." And no such expert has been more widely or respectfully cited, at the highest reaches of American journalism, than Barbara Hatch Rosenberg. After all, notes the *New Yorker*, Rosenberg is "not chopped liver." She is a "veteran molecular biologist" with a long-term professional interest in biological weapons—and "deeply concerned hazel eyes."

Which may be true. But it is also true that this veteran molecular biologist's sensational pronouncements betray a surprisingly uncertain grasp of contemporary genetic research and clinical protocols concerning *Bacillus anthracis*. And a surprisingly limited familiarity with anthrax-related military and civil-defense projects around the world. And a surprisingly unscientific, even Oliver Stone-scale, incaution about the "facts" at her disposal.

Rosenberg claims the FBI has known the anthrax mailer's precise identity for months already, but has deliberately avoided arresting him—indeed, may never arrest him—because he "knows too much" that the United States "isn't very anxious to publicize." Specifically, according to an account the hazel-eyed professor offered on BBC Two's flagship *Newsnight* telecast March 14, the suspect is a former federal bioweapons scientist now doing contract work for the CIA. Last fall, you see, the man's Langley masters supposedly decided they'd like to field-test what would happen if billions of lethal anthrax spores were sent through the regular mail, and "it was left to him to decide exactly how to carry it out." The loosely supervised madman then used his assignment to launch an attack on the media and Senate "for his own motives." And, this truth being obviously too hot to handle, the FBI is now trying very hard *not* to discover it.

What if "some kind of deal is made that the perpetrator just disappears from view," Rosenberg worries aloud? She appears already to have taken proactive steps to thwart such a conspiracy. Over the past several months, using language lifted almost verbatim from Rosenberg's website, ABC News and the *Washington Times* have both fingered the same unnamed "top scientist" as the FBI's only (never-to-be-revealed) anthrax suspect. Except that the poor man turns out to be a former Ohio laboratory technician who has never done bacteriological research of any kind—and whose unfortunate history of alcoholism has lately reduced him to working in a Milwaukee-area bowling alley. Which bowling alley has no known ties to the CIA's Directorate of Operations.

Barbara Hatch Rosenberg's theory is crackpot.

3 Well, wait a minute. Wasn't the anthrax powder mailed last fall chemically identical to stuff produced in classified U.S. labs?

That's far from clear, and even if it were clear it probably wouldn't help solve these crimes.

In order to produce inhalation anthrax, bacterial spore-particles must be small enough—no more than a couple or three microns wide—to reach a victim's lower respiratory mucosa. And for decades, until very recently, scientists believed that the mechanical milling required to produce such fine dust artificially would also produce a charge of static electricity sufficient to bind anthrax spores together into oversized, harmless clumps. To prevent this from happening—to keep the spores separate, "floaty," and therefore deadly—bioweapons specialists in the United States and elsewhere went to considerable lengths to identify a chemical additive that would, like throwing a sheet of Bounce into your clothes dryer, remove the static. It has been widely reported, but never confirmed, that American scientists eventually settled on silica. It has been just as widely reported, and more or less confirmed, that the Soviet and Iraqi biowarfare programs each at some point used a substance called bentonite, instead.

The Armed Forces Institute of Pathology has performed energy dispersive X-ray spectroscopy on anthrax powder recovered from at least two of last fall's letters and has apparently discovered trace amounts of silica, but no sign of aluminum, an element basic to the best-known and most common form of bentonite (montmorillonite). Based on this result, government investigators

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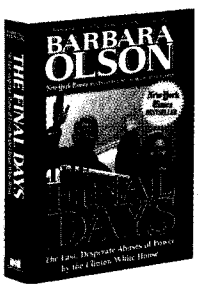

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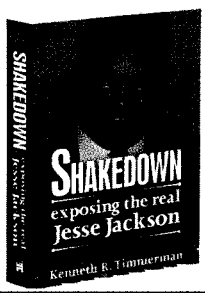

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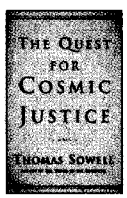

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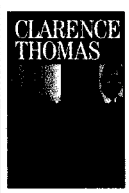

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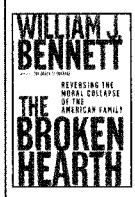

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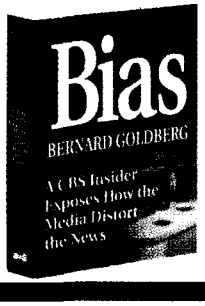

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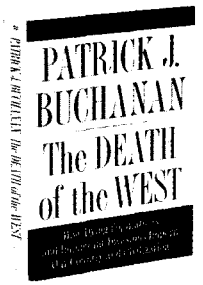

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have concluded, according to the *Washington Post*, that "it is unlikely that the spores were originally produced in the former Soviet Union or Iraq." On the same basis, and getting similarly ahead of herself, Barbara Hatch Rosenberg has decided the spores were prepared by a rogue or sanctioned U.S. laboratory worker.

But the fundamental chemistry involved here cannot sustain such certainty. Silica, or silicon dioxide, is simple quartz or sand, the most abundant solid material on earth. "Bentonite" is the generic term for a class of natural or processed clays derived from volcanic ash, all of which are themselves mineral compounds of silica—and *not* all of which necessarily contain aluminum. In other words: Trace amounts of silica in an anthrax powder are consistent with the presence of bentonite. And the absence of aluminum from that powder is not enough to exculpate any foreign germ-warfare factory thought to have used bentonite in the past.

The FBI and Rosenberg seem also to have ignored what has been standard practice in U.S. biodefense, medical, and veterinary laboratories for most of the past thirty years: Work with virulent strains of *anthracis* in dried-spore, aerosolized form is virtually unheard of. Pentagon production of weapons-ready—and presumably silicate—anthrax powder was abandoned during the first Nixon administration. The U.S. Army Medical Research Institute of Infectious Diseases (USAMRIID) at Fort Detrick, for example, doesn't even own the requisite technology to manufacture dry aerosols; USAMRIID scientists, like their civilian counterparts, use only "wet" anthrax—which has usually been genetically altered or irradiated to render it non-toxic.

There is one known exception to this rule. Four months ago the Army's Dugway Proving Ground in Nevada confirmed that in recent years it has conducted occasional, limited experiments with fully pathogenic anthrax powders—reportedly to test prophylactic measures against a frightening, vaccine-resistant strain of the bacterium thought to have been cooked up by Russian geneticists during the early 1990s. Here's the thing, though: The Army is mum on the question, but there is no reason to think that Dugway's virulent aerosols (every speck of them fully accounted for, laboratory officials insist) were prepared with silica, according to the rumored 1960s recipe. The science of environmental engineering, which hardly existed in the 1960s, has lately revealed a great deal of new information about the dispersal patterns of *anthracis* and other airborne microbes. As a consequence, old assumptions about the effect of electricity on the aerosolization of bacterial pathogens—like those from a just-opened letter—have been revised: Lethal quantities of lethally small *anthracis* particles can and do spread over a large area, on normal indoor air currents and in very little time, *whether or not* they have been treated with an anti-static compound.

So whoever was responsible for last fall's bioterrorism wouldn't have needed to add silica to his anthrax powder at all. But he—or she, or they—might have had use for it while manufacturing that powder to begin with. Before they were kicked out of Iraq for good, U.N. weapons inspectors concluded that Saddam's military biologists were no longer relying on mechanical milling machines to render dried-out paste-colonies of *anthracis* bacteria into fine dust, but had instead refined a spray drying technique that produced the dust in a single step. And the suspected key ingredient in this Iraqi innovation, interestingly enough: pharmaceutical-grade silica, a common industrial drying agent.

4 But last fall's anthrax *was* milled mechanically, so it can't have come from Iraq, right?

We don't know that it was milled, really. Published reports conflict on this point, and those news accounts that do suggest the anthrax was milled invariably attribute the intelligence to federal investigators impressed by the super-granulated quality of the Leahy sample. In fact, evidently concerned that the Leahy letter might thus tend to confirm the Barbara Hatch Rosenberg conspiracy theory at its most rococo (i.e., that someone walked the anthrax straight out of a CIA lab), certain "government sources" have lately begun putting out word that the stuff was actually *too good* to be American. Two weeks ago, an item in *Newsweek* described a "secret new analysis" said to be circulating through high-level Washington, according to which analysis the Leahy letter's powder was "ground to a microscopic fineness not achieved by U.S. biological weapons experts." Researchers have found evidence of "intense milling," *Newsweek* explained: individual, free-floating *anthracis* spores, something our own government's scientists have "never seen" before.

But that's absurd. Individual, free-floating *anthracis* spores are what those scientists look at every day. And it's hardly a secret. During a December 15 Centers for Disease Control-sponsored conference on post-exposure prevention of inhalation anthrax—you can find the transcript on CDC's website—Dr. Louise Pitt of USAMRIID discussed in considerable detail how her colleagues at Ft. Detrick do their *anthracis* research. The spores, she said,

> are diluted to the desired concentration in sterile distilled water, water for injection. Our aerosols are extremely well characterized and defined. The particle size of the aerosol

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has a mass-meeting-aerosol diameter between .8 and 1.4 microns. That means that the aerosols that we are generating are basically single-spore aerosols. There's very, very little clumping of two spores. They are single-spore aerosols.

And remember, Ft. Detrick does not employ a mechanical milling process. Because, as it happens, people like Dr. Pitt have discovered much easier ways to make what our experts persist in calling the Leahy letter's "weapons-grade" anthrax: If they want it in a mist, they dilute the spores in water, as USAMRIID does. And if they want their anthrax dry, in a powder, they run it through what is essentially a very fancy flour sifter, a device commercially available throughout the world. This practice, too, has been specified in the open literature. A "Risk Assessment of Anthrax Threat Letters" published last year by Canada's Defence Research Establishment Suffield (DRES), for instance, was based on a bacterial specimen prepared in the "routine manner." Agar-grown cultures were dried into a "clumpy, undistinguished mess." And the mess was then filtered with a sifter, separating the largest chunks and leaving behind a final powder containing "a high proportion of singular spores."

Under a microscope, of course, singular spores, both milled and unmilled, look exactly the same.

5 What about the fact that last fall's attacks involved the American "Ames" strain of anthrax?

Careful. On October 25, at the height of the crisis, Tom Ridge announced that the bacteria were of "the Ames strain" or "an Ames strain." That same day, however, Dr. Jeffrey Kaplan, director of the CDC, said that *anthracis* samples taken from letters mailed to Sen. Tom Daschle and the *New York Post*—and from the spinal fluid of Florida photo editor Bob Stevens, the outbreak's first victim—were consistent with "a number of different strains." Kaplan's deputy, Dr. Julie Gerberding, added a further nuance. The Daschle, *Post*, and Stevens samples—"strains," she also called them—were "indistinguishable."

But if they were indistinguishable, how could they be different "strains"? During a November 14 CDC "telebriefing," Gerberding acknowledged that "it's very important to set the record straight on this issue." And she made a valiant attempt to do so:

> These strains in the various regions of the country that we're dealing with are indistinguishable on the basis of their antibiotic susceptibility as well as their typing using more sophisticated molecular tools, and they have some characteristics in common with several of the naturally acquired strains of anthrax that have been seen in animals in the United States and in the United Kingdom and elsewhere. . . . But they're not identical.

Got that?

6 What's going on here? Is it Ames or isn't it?

Insofar as any of them feels sure of the answer, none of the scientists now working with the government will state it unambiguously, in part because they are concerned for the security of a massive ongoing investigation. Even were security not a concern, however, the question whether they are dealing with "the Ames strain" would still be a vexed one, for two reasons. First, "strain" is a word that has no fixed, technical meaning: Any set of microbes with closely related genetic characteristics gets called a "strain," but how closely related they must be—at what level of analysis should a set of microbes be subdivided into "strains"—is a subjective judgment. Is your second cousin "family" or merely distant kin?

Then there is the peculiar nature of anthrax itself. *Anthracis* is the world's most molecularly homogeneous bacterial species. As recently as 1995, every laboratory isolate ever tested appeared to be genetically identical, and only three of them had been labeled strains. There was Sterne, named after the South African researcher who developed veterinary medicine's still-standard anthrax vaccine. There was Vollum, originally recovered from livestock in England and a staple of the U.S. bioweapons program in the 1960s. And there was Ames, so dubbed by a USAMRIID scientist in 1981 (for the town in Iowa, though the sample actually originated in Texas). The Sterne strain was sui generis; it didn't cause disease. But no one knew exactly why, and the three strains remained genetically indistinguishable.

In 1996, a group of researchers at a Veterans Administration hospital in North Carolina were the first to announce the detection of meaningful differences in the DNA of various anthrax isolates; *anthracis*, they thought, was a species encompassing five distinct genetic subgroups. Over the next few years, building on this work, Dr. Paul Keim of Northern Arizona University in Flagstaff examined hundreds of anthrax samples from a collection maintained by Louisiana State University veterinarian Martin Hugh-Jones and further refined the bacterium's phylogeny: He found 89 unique genomes—strains, if you dare—in six major families of *anthracis*. Then, in 1999, Tim Read of the non-profit Institute for Genomic Research in Rockville, Maryland, published a full map of the Ames strain's main chromosome on the Internet—all the DNA letter-strings for nearly 6,000 genes. Using Read's data, Keim has since located at least

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50 places along the anthrax genome where various strains diverge, and he believes he has positively fingerprinted more than 100 such strains in his own ballooning archive of bacteria.

Keim and Read are both heavily involved in the current investigation. Read has completed another full sequence of *anthracis* DNA, this one taken from Bob Stevens, last fall's first fatality. Keim has compared that roadmap with Read's previous, Ames-strain diagram. The two samples are said to be a match.

But they can only be a match within the limits of Keim's existing classification system for anthrax. And back in the fall, before they stopped talking to the press so frequently, he and Read were quite candid about what those limits entail. *Bacillus anthracis* mutates into separate strains at a glacial pace. It takes maybe a million generations before even a single piece of its DNA is altered. And any given isolate of the bacteria finishes only a few hundred of those reproductive cycles during each active life span, while infecting an animal or human host. Then, if it's lucky enough not to be killed by antibiotics or incinerated with its victim's corpse, an anthrax colony hibernates in sporulated form for decades at a time. It is because their opportunities for genetic development have been so few and far between that many of the *anthracis* strains Paul Keim believes he has identified are separated by just a handful of DNA nucleotides—out of more than five million in the bacterium's full genome.

Which means, Keim admitted to *Science* magazine back in November, that many of his putative strains cannot be distinguished from one another outside the margin of error for current DNA sequencing technology: one misread nucleotide in every 100,000 examined. Around the same time, asked by an NPR radio interviewer whether it would be "possible to find out who sent the anthrax, where it came from, [by] doing gene studies of it," Tim Read paused a moment—and said, "I don't think so."

7 Assuming that it *were* possible to match last fall's anthrax with the Ames strain, would that mean it had to have come from an American laboratory?

No. The bacterial culture that Army biologist Gregory Knudson called "Ames" in 1981 came from a 14-month-old, 700-pound Beefmaster heifer that had recently died on a ranch in Jim Hogg County, Texas. So far as modern science can determine, an identical form of *anthracis* continues to widely contaminate the soil in south Texas. In 1997, 16 years after the Jim Hogg case and hundreds of miles to the northwest, Ames is known to have killed at least one goat—and to have sickened two ranchhands who cut open the poor beast's stomach and poked around inside before storing the carcass in a kitchen freezer. Ames, as the CDC correctly asserts, is a naturally occurring bacterium. Want some? "I'd look for a dead animal," LSU's Martin Hugh-Jones advises. "You could just take some blood from the animal, some tissue, and swab and grow it up on blood agar—nothing easier. . . . I'd say first-year college microbiology."

You wouldn't even have to make a trip to Texas. Or be in the United States at all. Very closely related strains of anthrax—again, within the margin of DNA sequencing error—have been recovered from infected livestock in Argentina, England, South Africa, India, Australia, and China.

8 Really, though: Isn't it more likely that what we're talking about was stolen or cloned from a pre-existing laboratory stock?

Yes, but that doesn't help narrow things down much, either. Barbara Hatch Rosenberg's website lists Canada's DRES and a place called Porton Down in England as the only foreign installations known to keep Ames in their collections. Her list is woefully incomplete. Porton Down alone has openly acknowledged sharing Ames cultures with its associated public health agency, the Centre for Applied Microbiology and Research. And that outfit in turn has acknowledged distributing Ames to an unspecified number of private researchers.

What's more, in March of last year a group of French scientists at the Centre d'Études du Bouchet published a report on experiments they'd conducted with their own Ames sample. And explained that they'd collaborated on those experiments with a second French laboratory at the University of Paris. And expressed gratitude for shipments of Ames they'd received from a third French laboratory, the Institut Pasteur. And from a fourth French laboratory at the Agence Française de Sécurité Sanitaire des Aliments. And from one Dr. Mats Forman of Sweden, too.

The stuff is all over the place. It is almost certainly held in one or more Russian depositories. According to an elaborate forensic analysis sponsored by the National Academy of Sciences in 1998, the accidental 1979 explosion of a Soviet biowarfare factory in what was then Sverdlovsk released no fewer than four separate strains of *anthracis* into the atmosphere, one of which is now grouped in the same subtype as Ames. At its height in the early 1990s, the Soviet germ-weapons program, Biopreparat, had 2,000 scientists working exclusively on anthrax. Those few of them who remain employed by successor agencies are currently paid $100 per month to maintain custody of laboratory facilities like the one in

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Obolensk—which is critically delinquent in its payments for the electricity necessary to keep 3,000 different anthrax isolates, the world's largest collection, safely on ice.

All of which makes penetration of the wobbly Russian biodefense establishment—by rogue nations or terrorist organizations—a worrisome and real possibility. Iran, for example, is known to have recruited a number of disgruntled or indigent Russian military biologists. Saddam Hussein, on the other hand, is not known to have bagged any Russians.

But he may not need to. Top Iraqi scientists Nassir Hindawi and Abdul Rahman Thamer first tried to acquire a sample of the Ames strain from Porton Down in 1988. They were turned down, but over the next two years they did manage to purchase an enormous quantity of anthrax-ready biological growth medium from a British commercial supplier. And nine other strains of *anthracis* from the Institut Pasteur and an American company now located in Manassas, Virginia. And at least two variants of the intensely pathogenic Vollum strain from . . . who knows where, and in addition to who knows what else.

In late November, a "microbiologist who has studied Ames" told the *Washington Post* he thought "the probability that [the Iraqis] don't have the strain is near zero."

9 Surely the FBI has *some* substantial reason to discount such fears and focus its attention on a domestic suspect?

That could well be, but if so they're keeping it to themselves.

There is purely circumstantial though highly suggestive evidence that might seem to link Iraq with last fall's anthrax terrorism. The U.N.'s former top bioweapons inspector in Iraq, Richard O. Spertzel, has told Congress about reports of a "cryptic September article in a newspaper run by Saddam's son, Uday" which promised that a "virus" would soon attack "the raven," apparently a Baath party curseword for America. Spertzel has also told Congress that Iraq has conducted military exercises simulating the dispersal of anthrax spores from crop-dusting aircraft—a subject in which both Mohamed Atta and Zacarias Moussaoui, the alleged "twentieth hijacker," are known to have expressed intense interest. Last June, one of Atta's September 11 confederates, Ahmed Ibrahim Al Haznawi, walked into a Fort Lauderdale, Florida, emergency room with a painless but inflamed one-inch black lesion on his lower left leg. In retrospect, Al Haznawi's attending physician, Dr. Christos Tsonas, is convinced that the wound was cutaneous anthrax. The Department of Health and Human Services' top bioterrorism expert agrees, as do two leading researchers at the Johns Hopkins University Center for Civilian Biodefense Strategies.

And so on. The FBI has hardly said a word about why it is inclined to mistrust or make light of such signals. And what little the Bureau has offered about why it prefers to focus instead on possible American suspects isn't especially persuasive, unfortunately.

FBI handwriting experts have somehow determined that the xerox-copied taunts included with last fall's anthrax letters—"We have this anthrax. You die now. Are you afraid?"—were written by a native English-speaker, though they note without venturing an explanation that "he" used only block lettering, with slightly larger block letters at the beginning of every noun. Might it also be that "he" wasn't a native English-speaker at all, but rather someone who grew up speaking a language—like Arabic—whose alphabet has no upper or lower cases? Someone whose experience with Romance-language script was limited to his temporary residence in, say, the one Western country where nouns are always capitalized? That would be Germany, once home to Mohamed Atta and any number of other al Qaeda operatives. It is not clear whether the FBI has considered this clue.

By contrast, the Bureau and its allied "home-grown terror" theorists have clearly given a great deal of thought—too much thought—to the fact that their suspect left no potentially incriminating personal marks on last fall's letters: no fingerprints anywhere on the envelopes or xeroxes, and no saliva on the envelopes' adhesive flaps. To Barbara Hatch Rosenberg, this indicates that the mailer was a spook-like U.S. government insider, someone with "training or experience in covering evidence." Similarly, and for the same reason, the FBI believes Anthrax Man exhibited a notably "organized, rational thought process in furtherance of his criminal behavior." Actually, though, all he exhibited was a bare minimum of human brain function and an animal instinct for self-preservation. Ask yourself: Would you be willing to touch with your bare hands, much less lick with your *tongue*, an envelope containing two billion spores of the universe's most dangerous bacterium? The question answers itself.

Speaking on background to reporters, FBI officials have repeatedly endorsed Professor Rosenberg's interpretation of the mysterious advisory included with two of the anthrax mailings—that their recipients should begin taking "penacilin." The misspelling, Rosenberg argues, is a deliberate feint intended to distract investigators from the truth, and the prescription itself is what should lead them back: The reference to penicillin means the perpetrator was an American scientist, knowledgeable about the clinical protocols for treatment of anthrax, and eager to cure those of his fellow citizens whom he was simultaneously

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making very sick. But it means nothing of the kind, in fact. No true expert, benignly inspired, would nowadays prescribe penicillin for an *anthracis* infection. Ever since Tim Read published his Ames-strain DNA sequence in 1999, American researchers have understood that the organism's genes encode a beta-lactamase enzyme that neutralizes penicillin. American public health agencies have responded accordingly. CDC bulletins, for example, specifically recommend *against* reliance on penicillin in cases of systemic anthrax toxemia.

The Miss Marple of SUNY/Purchase does no better when it comes to divining an overarching motive for last fall's bacteriological assaults. The deed was done by a Pentagon budget hawk who "must have realized in advance that the anthrax attack would result in the strengthening of U.S. defense and response capabilities," Rosenberg conjectures. "This is not likely to have been a goal of anti-American terrorists." And the anti-American terrorists who flew two Boeing 757s into the side of the World Trade Center, one week before the first New Jersey-postmarked anthrax letters were mailed—those people did *not* suppose their actions would provoke a massive American military response? Perhaps Mohamed Atta, too, was a rogue, right-wing subcontractor for the CIA? Rosenberg's logic is elusive.

Federal investigators, for their part, arrive at much the same conclusion, though by reverse direction. The anthrax mailings were *insufficiently* provocative, a "senior administration official" has told the *Wall Street Journal*, explaining his colleagues' basic assumption: "Al Qaeda is into mass casualties, not this junior-varsity, onesy-twosey terrorism." This would make the suspect's identity contingent on the body count he achieved, something he could not possibly have predicted; the logic here seems nonexistent. What if the anthrax mailer had managed, as intended, to assassinate the majority leader of the United States Senate? Would that have been senior varsity enough for the FBI?

10 So who *did* send the anthrax? What are you saying?

Simply this: Based on the publicly available evidence, there appears to be no convincing rationale for the FBI's nearly exclusive concentration on American suspects. And the possibility is far from foreclosed that the anthrax bioterrorist was just who he said he was: a Muslim, impliedly from overseas, who thought the events of "09-11-01" were something to be celebrated—and who would have been doubly pleased to see "you die now." ♦

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Policing Terror, Palestinian Style

You can't expect a terrorist to crack down on terror.

By Eli J. Lake

Gaza

In the coming days, President Bush will send CIA director George Tenet to Gaza and the West Bank to assess the capacity of the ravaged Palestinian security services to prevent the suicide bombings that have made everyday life perilous for Israelis. Tenet and other CIA men on the ground in the area have tried to persuade a cadre of Yasser Arafat's top security chiefs to sit down with their Israeli counterparts and resume the security cooperation envisioned under a cease-fire plan Tenet helped author last June. But neither side gives this mission much of a chance.

To begin with, the majority of the Palestinian jails, police stations, and operations centers, along with the records kept in these places—critical for effective counterterrorism, assuming the Palestinian authorities were interested in counterterrorism—have been destroyed by Israeli missiles in response to Palestinian attacks on civilians.

Captured records implicate the highest levels of the Palestinian Authority in the terrorist attacks its security services were created to prevent.

And most of the records Israeli missiles haven't destroyed have been captured by the Israeli Defense Forces. In many cases these documents implicate the highest levels of the Palestinian Authority in the terrorist attacks the security services were created to prevent.

If Tenet and his spies are ever to have a chance of success, they will need the cooperation of Amin al-Hindi, the director of the Palestinian General Intelligence Service and one of the few figures in the Palestinian Authority whom the Israelis are willing to consider as a possible partner.

Eli J. Lake covers the State Department for United Press International.

When I crossed the 200 yards that separate the neat rows of concrete barricades on the Israeli side of the Eretz Crossing into the cluttered and crumbling slums of Gaza, I saw what al-Hindi is up against. On nearly every wall throughout the city, Arabic graffiti glorify the "martyrs" al-Hindi's men are supposed to apprehend. The view from al-Hindi's top floor office, with its cherry wood cabinets and well-oiled brown leather sofas, is of an abandoned field littered with garbage, with a row of metal shacks in the distance. Next to his ultra-modern twin-towered headquarters stands an abandoned amusement park, closed because it is too near a potential target of Israel's air force. One of his aides, Mamdouh Fadel al-Borno, gives me a tour of the headquarters. At one point he gestures down a vacant, darkened corridor and says, "That's our counter-terrorism bureau. Nobody is here because they are afraid of the next Israeli attack."

Two years ago al-Hindi's cooperation with Israel's internal security service, the Shin Bet, was unquestioned by either the Americans or the Israelis. Today his old partners say his intelligence service, along with just about every other official organ of the Palestinian Authority, is not only failing to prevent the suicide bombers that plague everyday life here, but helping coordinate the operations.

For example, among other seized documents, the Israelis released on April 4 a status report dated February 6, 2002, on the "armed Fatah personnel" in Tulkarm. The report was produced by Hamdi al-Darduch, the Palestinian Authority's chief of intelligence for the West Bank village. It describes in detail the activities, capacities, funding sources, and political affiliations of three squads of militant groups in the area affiliated with Arafat's own political party, Fatah.

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Describing the Ziad Daas squad, al-Darduch's report says: "This squad carried out high quality successful attacks. The last in this framework was the coordination and planning of the operation in Hadera to avenge the death of martyr Raed al-Karmi." That "operation" killed 6 Israelis and injured another 25 attending a bar mitzvah on January 17. The memo goes on: "It would be fair to say this squad is the most disciplined, and its men understand the general situation. Its men are very close to us and maintain with us continuous coordination and contact."

Unlike other members of the Palestinian Authority when asked about similar documents, al-Hindi did not dispute the authenticity of the al-Darduch report when I showed him an English version.

"There is no doubt some of the papers are true. I have a copy of this," he said. "This is part of his work to give a clear report on everything that is going on there that is existing in the area, including Fatah. Our work is to collect intelligence, so he reported this work to his superiors, and the Israelis considered this as a document against the Palestinian General Intelligence."

Even so, al-Hindi believes the Israelis fundamentally misunderstand the cause of the terror that has been unleashed upon them. He says, "A big portion of our work was to counter these actions, and we arrested many of those guys who are behind planning these attacks. But at the same time we shouldn't forget the mess the Israelis created and the psychological status of the Palestinian people from what they are seeing, assassinations, arrests in Area A, destroyed houses, and all kinds of destruction. Most of those carrying out these operations are either relatives or brothers and sisters of those whose houses are being demolished."

Al-Hindi admits that rogue elements of the Fatah organization are involved in attacks on civilians. But he also points out that suicide bombs are relatively easy to manufacture. "Go on the Internet and you can find out how to make them."

When I ask al-Hindi about documents that implicate Arafat directly, he clucks his tongue and says that the besieged chairman of the Palestinian Authority does not authorize suicide bombings or terrorist attacks. He adds, "Chairman Arafat is responsible for Fatah and the Palestinian people. Anyone from Fatah or any other branch of the Palestinian Authority, if he asks for help, Arafat will sign it according to our capabilities."

While the Israelis have yet to find a piece of paper that shows Arafat authorizing terror strikes directly, a September 7, 2001, request for funds from Kamal Hamid, the Fatah regional commander in Bethlehem, reveals that Arafat was at least willing to send money to those who do. The document shows Hamid requesting $2,000 each for 24 Fatah activists in Bethlehem, including Atef Abiat, who according to the IDF was responsible for a May 21, 2001, shooting attack on civilians in the Jerusalem suburb of Gilo. Arafat scribbled on the document that they would receive $300 each.

Another memo dated September 16, 2001, with hand-written annotations from Arafat's finance minister, Fuad Shubaki, authorizes procurement of the chemical precursors of explosives and compensation for memorial ceremonies for martyrs from the Al Aksa Martyrs Brigade, a loose affiliation of street toughs in the West Bank designated last month by the State Department as a Foreign Terrorist Organization.

Shubaki also orchestrated the 50-ton shipment of military explosives and heavy weapons from Iran seized in the vessel *Karine A* by the Israeli navy on January 3. He is now cooped up, along with the five men Israel said were behind the assassination of tourism minister Rehavham Zeevi, in Arafat's Ramallah compound.

The money for these operations, according to an intelligence report shared with me by a senior Israeli counterterrorism official, is often siphoned from contributions from European and Arab donors to the Palestinian Authority. One way this happens is through the conversion of dollars and euros to shekels. The Palestinian Authority receives donations in foreign currency, but pays civil service employees' salaries in shekels. The market rate for shekels is 4.7 to the dollar, but the salaries are paid, according to the Israelis, at 3.6 shekels to the dollar, and the difference goes to terror operations.

This week, Israel's counterterrorism bureau will present an intelligence report documenting the scheme to U.S. ambassador to Israel Daniel Kurtzer, according to Col. Udi Levy, the international relations chief for Israel's Bureau of counterterrorism. Levy says this report will also show that the cash derived from the difference in exchange rates goes directly to the Tanzim, the militia wing of Fatah, whose general secretary, Marwan Barghouti, was apprehended last week by Israeli authorities.

"They are paying the salaries for the civilians in shekels," Levy said. By finessing the exchange rates, he said, the Palestinian Authority diverts $2.5 million a month "to a slush fund. This is one example of how the Palestinian Authority is financing their terrorism."

Karim Nashashibi, the senior resident representative for the International Monetary Fund in the West Bank and Gaza, said in an interview last week that he believed this practice was mainly in order to keep the real value of salaries down. "In order to limit salary increases in shekels to certain categories like the police force, the

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The Palestinian Liberation Organization
The Palestinian National Authority
The President's Bureau

منظمة التحرير الفلسطينية
السلطة الوطنية الفلسطينية
مكتب الرئيس

ORIGINAL DOCUMENT

Palestinian Authority Captured Document

IDF
4 April 2002
TR1 - 243 - 02

The Palestinian Liberation Organization
The Palestinian National Authority
The President's Bureau

To the Fighting President

Brother Abu Amar, may the Lord protect you,

Greetings,

I hereby request you to allocate financial aid in the sum of $2500 for the following brethren

1. Ra'ad el Karmi *(note: Former commander of the Tanzim in Tulkarem)*
2. Ziad Muhamed Daas *(note: Commander of a group in the Fatah/Tanzim Tulkarem that masterminded the attack on the Bar-Mitzvah ceremony in Hadera)*
3. Amar Qadan *(note: a senior activist of Presidential Security/Force 17 in Ramallah, involved in the activities of its operational cell)*

Thank you,

Your son, Hussein al Sheik

(note: senior Fatah activist in the West Bank)

(Note: in Yasser Arafat's handwriting:

Treasury/Ramallah

Allocate $600 to each of them.

Yasser Arafat (*signature*)

(19/9/2001)

TRANSLATED DOCUMENT

Terror on the cheap: Asked for $2,500, Arafat allocates $600.

Palestinian Authority used a nominal exchange rate which is much more appreciated than the market exchange rate," he said. But he added that he was not aware that the extra cash was diverted for terrorism.

Al-Hindi quibbled about the exchange rate—he said it was closer to 3.9 shekels to the dollar—but admitted that some aid money was being diverted into private funds. "First of all, the PA budget is always in debt. We need more money," al-Hindi said. "The commitment is always more than what we get or have. We are not only responsible for the employees, we are responsible for the unemployed people as well." Al-Hindi laughed when I said Israeli officials said some of this money went to support terrorists. "We are not buying weapons with this money," he told me.

Israeli officials also say they have evidence that the Palestinian Authority has sold humanitarian contributions from Arab countries. "Unfortunately the Palestinian Authority always complains about donations and humanitarian aid," Levy said. "We have evidence of a donation from a European country, Greece, of 300 pounds of figs they sent to Palestinian poor people. They sold this in Israeli markets." Levy said this case and others were under investigation by Israel's customs services.

The documents the Israelis have seized are not limited to invoices and intelligence reports. A September 30, 2001, statement from Arafat's Liaison Committee, the official Palestinian bureau overseeing relations with Palestinian Arabs living inside Israel, marks the one-year anniversary of the current intifada with these words: "We will draw up with blood the map of the one homeland and the one people."

Anyone with a computer and a modem can find these documents in their original form and in English translation on the IDF website (*www.idf.il*). And it's worth checking this site regularly, because the Israelis say they have many more they intend to publish.

Given that these materials are readily available, it is peculiar that State Department officials are telling reporters they cannot discuss the documents because of the sensitivity of foreign intelligence. This is the exact opposite of the approach the Bush administration took in January to the *Karine A* affair. At the time, Secretary of State Colin Powell himself spoke publicly about the Israeli findings and called on Arafat to account for the matter.

The real reason the Bush administration has so far avoided commenting on the documents is that confirming their authenticity would undermine the turn in policy articulated by President Bush on April 4 and embraced by Powell on his peace mission last week. At a press conference Wednesday at the David Citadel Hotel in Jerusalem, Powell summed up the approach as follows: "Improvement in the security situation must be linked to the second point: determined pursuit of a political solution." Translation: The Israelis have to negotiate with Yasser Arafat in order to end the suicide bomb attacks they say they can prove that Arafat is at least partially funding, inciting, and failing to stop.

For now, at least, the Israelis have said "No, thanks" to that approach, and Bush seems unwilling to press them. ♦

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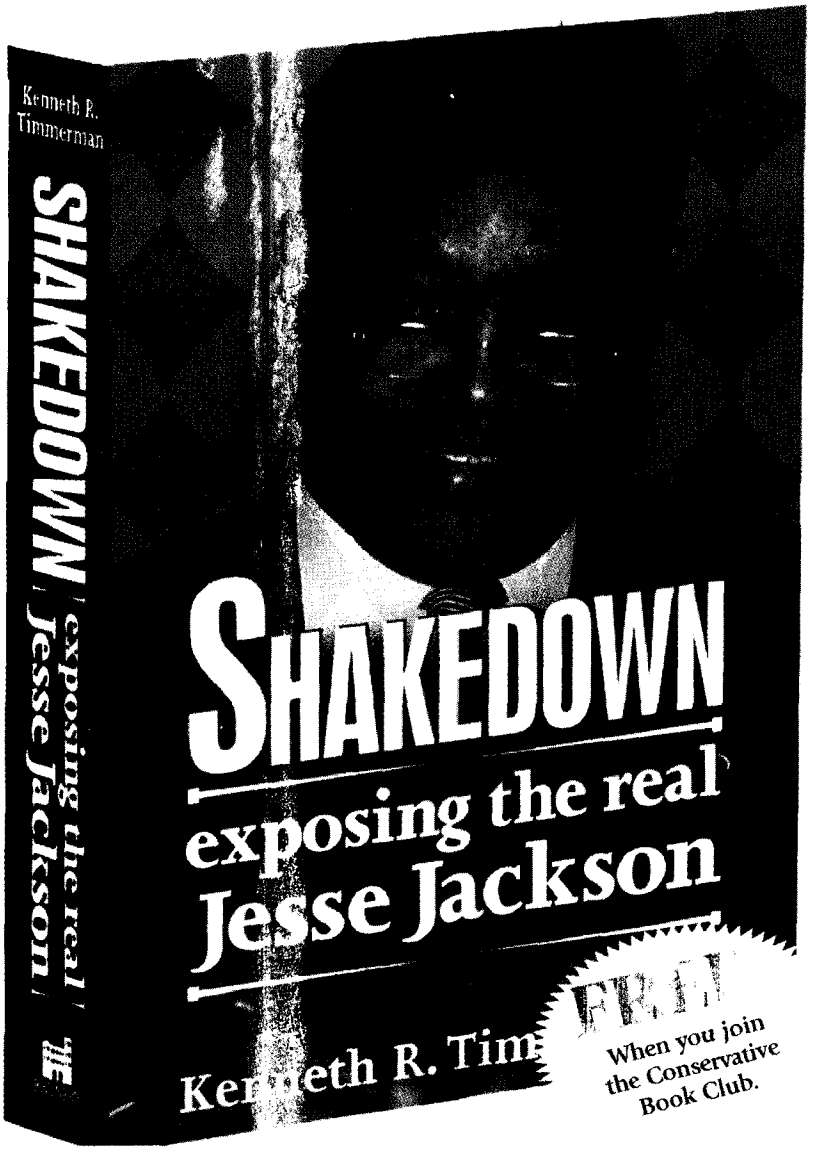

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- How Jackson threatened to stymie a huge media-company merger with "racism" charges – then gave it his "blessing" after receiving a $2 million "contribution."
- The shakedown of Anheuser-Busch, which ended only when the brewer awarded Jackson's sons, Yusef and Jonathan, a lucrative Chicago beer distributorship.

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Stopping the Future

Francis Fukuyama defends humanity

By J. Bottum

Francis Fukuyama is right, of course, when he says in his new book, *Our Posthuman Future*, that we should be frightened by the Brave New World that eugenic biotechnology has opened up for us. He's right about the probable causes. He's right about the likely effects. He's right about the incapacity of researchers to prevent themselves from pursuing new scientific discoveries. He's right about the inability of patients to stop themselves from demanding new scientific cures. He's right about nearly everything—except his reason for being right.

A political scientist at Johns Hopkins, Fukuyama first came to fame with his 1989 essay "The End of History" (published in book form in 1992 as *The End of History and the Last Man*), in which he argued that liberal democracy no longer faced any challengers in world history. Since then, he's produced two other books: *Trust: The Social Virtues and the Creation of Prosperity* and *The Great Disruption: Human Nature and the Reconstitution of Social Order*. But, he writes in the preface to *Our Posthuman Future*, he continued to think about the various critiques his "end of history" thesis received. And he found himself least able to dismiss the one which pointed out that the rise of liberal democracy is not the only defining feature of modern times. Science has pushed along modernity as well. And the end of history cannot have been reached until the end of science, for science always holds out the possibility that some technological advance will undo the gains of political and economic liberalism.

Along the way, as he worked his way through this thicket of issues, Fukuyama emerged as one of the most thoughtful and important commentators on cloning and biotechnology. Recently appointed a member of the President's Council on Bioethics, he's grown increasingly worried about the damage being done by science to human nature itself—a nature that is necessary, he believes, to claim and maintain the natural rights and human dignity that are at the heart of liberal democracy.

Our Posthuman Future
Consequences of the Biotechnology Revolution
by Francis Fukuyama
Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 272 pp., $25

So, in *Our Posthuman Future*, he sets out to define the dangers posed by biotechnology and to propose a solution. In the first section of the book, "Pathways to the Future," he points out the extent of the changes looming. In vitro fertilization already routinely screens embryos for birth defects before implantation. Human-animal hybrids are rapidly becoming a reality. And germ-line engineering, in which genetic changes will be handed on to future generations, is coming soon. All of these are eugenic in purpose. All of them portend the end of a distinction between medicine and enhancement. And all of them weaken the natural basis of rights and dignity.

The book's second section, "Being Human," takes up the question of human nature's vulnerability to scientific attack, and the final section, "What To Do," makes an impassioned call for the government to respond to this threat with significant regulation and watchdog organizations.

Fukuyama presents all this with his usual seriousness and learning. Analysis of the science moves as easily on the page as political theory, while he ranges through intellectual history, congressional debate, and popular culture. Fukuyama has a gift for a certain kind of nonpolemical prose that invites agreement without overpowering the reader. *Our Posthuman Future* is consistently fascinating and thought-provoking. But it's also finally unpersuasive—even for those who begin with the desire to halt eugenic biotechnology before it destroys us. And if we

J. Bottum is Books & Arts editor of The Weekly Standard.

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could only reach down to why the book is unpersuasive, we'd have some insight into the philosophical dilemma we face at this dangerous moment.

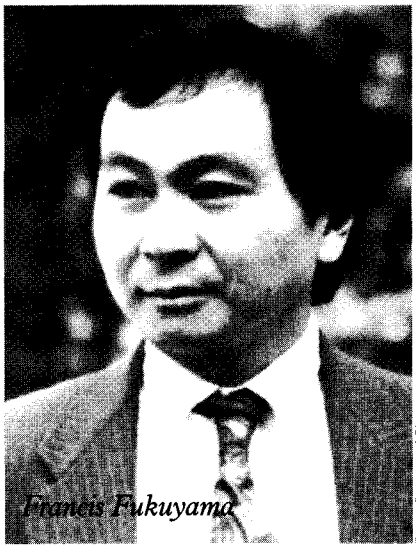
Essentially, Francis Fukuyama is caught in what we might call the great modern conservative dilemma. Politically speaking, modernity *is* liberalism, and liberalism *is* modernity. It was Fukuyama himself who pointed this out in *The End of History and the Last Man*. History hadn't come to an end in 1989, he insisted; the fall of Soviet communism was merely the final proof of liberalism's implacable triumph. History, as the clash of genuine alternatives, had actually ended right where Hegel said it had—in 1806, when Napoleon's victory at the Battle of Jena ensured that there no longer existed any real political possibilities besides liberalism.

But as modernity careened bloodily from side to side while liberalism's triumph worked itself out over the last two centuries, certain people have felt the desire to get off the boat. For some in America, for instance, the impetus was the disaster of socialist economics. For others it was an inability to stomach abortion. For others it was crime rates. For others it was euthanasia. For a few recent converts it is biotechnology and cloning. But, for all of them, a point is reached where they decide, "*This* is where I say, 'Enough.' *This* is a good place to stop."

Thus the economic libertarians wish to hold their position in the 1890s, the Evangelicals in the 1920s, the Southern agrarians in the 1940s, and the *National Review* conservatives in the 1950s. For a century and a half after the French Revolution, Catholicism stood as the only major force opposed to modernity, and even after the great rush of Vatican II *aggiornamento*, Catholics essentially froze the modernity they were willing to accept at 1964. A variety of factors drew off the neoconservatives around 1972.

Reagan's great conservative coalition of the 1980s was essentially a uniting of all these dissenters from the liberal project under one big Republican tent, and it was enormously successful in closing off certain economic lines that advanced thought had once assumed were identical with modern liberalism. Who now defends big government? Who still believes in the superior efficiency of a centrally planned economy?

But in other ways, the Reagan revolution was unsuccessful—as the continued rise of out-of-wedlock births and the apparent ineradicability of abortion and our lockstep march toward biotechnology's Brave New World all demonstrate. And that is because, in a certain way, there was never any chance of success. Examined closely, each disembarking group proves to have been seeking not to


Francis Fukuyama

Farrar, Straus and Giroux

undo modernity but to freeze it at a particular moment—a moment when certain vestigial elements left over from the premodern world kept at bay the worst effects of modern times.

And yet, lacking a coherent unmodern philosophy, we can offer no compelling reasons for modernity to stop where we wish it to. The economic and political battles against communism, by returning liberalism to its original course, certainly changed the direction of modernity. But they did nothing to slow modernity down. Over the last few decades, for example, political scientists, sociologists, and scholars of the American Founding have all pointed out that a smidgen of religious belief seems necessary to prevent modern liberalism from devouring its own political and economic gains. But this insight hasn't brought us much, for a culture's religious belief doesn't derive from the desire that the culture have a religious belief. Meanwhile, since its Enlightenment beginning, modernity has conceived of religion as its great enemy, and the antireligious impulse of the modern world is still steaming on and on—unchecked by our recognition that it ought not to, that it ought to have stopped somewhere before this.

Or, for another example, consider the question of whether we could have had a liberalism that was against abortion. We did manage to find an anti-Communist liberalism, after all—however much the Communists insisted that the future was theirs and that they were merely liberals in a hurry. And, hard as it is to remember, there was a moment around 1969 when several liberal writers were insisting that care for the poor and the weak demanded the rejection of abortion. But the liberationist impulse was simply too strong, and the sexual revolution too much fun. And so abortion came, despite opposition from those who wanted a modernity without it. Having bought a ticket this far, what means—what right, for that matter—did they have to stop the boat from going further?

And now, at last, modernity has brought us the biotech revolution, and Francis Fukuyama has reached his point of saying, "Enough. We must get off." God knows, he's right. The first third of his book is utterly convincing proof that we are heading straight onto reefs that will destroy us. But the question is how we are to prevent that—for it is the internal motor of modernity itself that has driven us here, and Fukuyama accepts vast seas of modern development.

His answer relies on the claim, put at length in his last book, *The Great Disruption*, that a "reconstitution of the social order" has been taking place in recent years. We have, he admits, gone through a very bad stretch: "With all of the blessings that flow from a more complex, information-based economy, certain bad things also happened to

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our social and moral life." But against those bad things, human nature has at last begun to reassert itself. "By nature," he writes, humans "organize themselves into not just families and tribes, but higher-level groups, and are capable of the moral virtues necessary to sustain such communities." And though the reconstituted society may not be all that conservatives desire, we have, as it were, reached a natural harbor and stopping point. We are no longer sailing deeper into the chaos that the great cultural disruption of the 1960s brought us.

"Human nature" is a distinctly premodern notion: a philosophical essence (to its proponents) or invention (to its rejecters) that overcomes the apparent divide between metaphysics and ethics; a way to connect the structure of reality with the moral life. If we are built in a certain fashion, then there are generally right and generally wrong ways to try to live.

A Christian vision of man as made in the image of God comes very quickly to positive ethical laws. Aristotle's account of human beings as aimed at happiness through friendship and contemplation issues almost as quickly in precise demands. Fukuyama, however, is reluctant to give a precise definition of what human nature might be. In *Our Posthuman Future*, he offers one loose account based on statistical norms—and a second by arguing backwards from the politically accepted truth of natural rights to the existence of at least as much human nature as is necessary to support those rights. But, whatever human nature is, its reality is not necessarily incompatible with a modern outlook on things. Indeed, before the Great Disruption, most enlightened thought assumed its truth. And there are two pieces of modern evidence that suggest this human nature actually exists: the fact that a return to common sense has caused the cultural chaos to level off in recent years, and the fact that the trendiest science—in the guise of evolutionary biology—has been increasingly prone to the rediscovery of human nature.

All of this, of course, provides reasons to stay on board modernity's boat.

WILLIAM J. BENNETT

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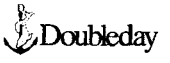

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But now, Fukuyama points out, biotechnology wants either to redefine or to abolish human nature.

His analysis here is brilliant. Think for a moment, he demands, of what the world will look like when masses of people survive beyond their hundredth birthday. What will happen to jobs, positions, honors, and wealth? What will happen when First World nations have a median age of sixty, while Third World nations have a median age of twenty?

Think, for that matter, of what will happen when anti-depressants and mood-changers reach perfection. "Prozac and Ritalin are only the first generation of psychotropic drugs," he notes. "In the future, virtually everything that the popular imagination envisions genetic engineering accomplishing is much more likely to be accomplished sooner through neuropharmacology."

Fukuyama has been almost alone in insisting that our huge cultural investment in such drugs is of a piece with biotechnology, but his argument in *Our Posthuman Future* is convincing. The immortality project, the perfect-baby project, and the universal-happiness project are all aimed at the same end: the amelioration and consequent elimination of the human condition. Our notions of natural rights, our claims of human dignity and equality, are all based on the complex interplay of birth, health, aging, and death. And when these have changed as completely as biotechnology wants to change them, what will remain of rights, dignity, and equality?

Indeed, what will remain of humanity itself? Fukuyama opens with a curious quotation from Martin Heidegger: "The threat to man does not come in the first instance from the potentially lethal machines and apparatus of technology. The actual threat has always afflicted man in his essence. . . . Man [is threatened] with the possibility that it could be denied to him to enter into a more original revealing and hence to experience the call of a more primal truth." It's never easy to figure out what Heidegger's stray gerunds and knotted participles mean, but the claim here seems to be exactly what worries Fukuyama: that we can actually close off to ourselves, by changing human nature, the truth of reality itself.

The problem Fukuyama faces is how to prevent this biotech future from coming to pass. He has an analysis that shows stopping it to be necessary. And he has, in the last third of his book, a device of massive and immediate government regulation that he thinks will work. What he lacks is a coherent means to connect the two. He

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demands that we convince ourselves we need to defend human nature. But this human nature proves, at last, to be merely the same kind of premodern vestige that all the previous passengers disembarking from the modern boat tried to claim: something needed by modernity in order to preserve its liberal political gains, but nonetheless incompatible with modernity.

Fukuyama's difficulty is that he has bought too much else in modernity to reject biotechnology easily. You can see this in the support he claims from evolutionary biology, for one branch of science is unlikely to give sufficient ammunition to fight the horrors brought about by another branch. With a thick account of human nature, it might be possible to accept good science and reject bad. (*Our Posthuman Future* praises Pope John Paul II's treatment of evolution in this context.) Fukuyama, however, mistrusts thick accounts. He is too modern to think he can persuade us with the pope's religious claim, too current to imagine he can restore us to Aristotle's philosophical view, and too scientific to rely on Aldous Huxley's literary understanding. But without some such support present generally in the culture, the government regulations for which he calls are doomed. The political pressure from activist groups will be too great. The moral confusion of politicians will be too massive. And, most of all, the internal motor of science will be too powerful.

There was a revealing moment last June, during testimony on the House of Representatives' bill to ban human cloning, when Congressman Ted Strickland of Ohio complained, "We should not allow theology, philosophy, or politics to interfere with the decision we make" on what ought to be a purely scientific matter. Like so much that has been said in the cloning debate, it was both profoundly silly and profoundly true. Strickland was merely exasperated and vulgar enough to say out loud what we all perfectly well understand. Science has its own imperative force, and we cannot resist it without ceasing to be modern. Unless we embrace as a culture some coherent unmodernism, there is no preventing the biotech future. You and I—and Francis Fukuyama—may get off the boat, but the boat is going on.

We've had one attempt to cobble an anti-modern philosophy solely from the resources of modernity itself; it was called "postmodernism," and apart from encouraging a residual suspicion of all science, it did nothing to solve our problem and a great deal to exacerbate it. What we need instead is someone of Fukuyama's intelligence and skill to gather up the premodern elements necessary to maintain the political advances of modernity—and to build them into a new and coherent philosophical vehicle to take us out of these dangerous waters. ♦

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Mastering the Senate

All the way with LBJ.

BY ROBERT D. NOVAK

It has been twelve years since publication of *Means of Ascent*, the second volume of Robert Caro's *The Years of Lyndon Johnson*, but the long-anticipated third volume, *Master of the Senate*, is worth the wait. Portraying Johnson's most productive and effective years as Senate majority leader, the book, which covers the years 1949-1960, reveals how an insecure southern politician suddenly emerged as one of American history's greatest legislative leaders—and thereby opened the door for himself to the White House. The Lyndon B. Johnson who emerges in Caro's multidimensional portrait is infinitely more powerful and vastly more interesting than the Senate leaders who preceded and followed him.

Master of the Senate
The Years of Lyndon Johnson
by Robert A. Caro
Knopf, 1,167 pp., $35

Caro seems finally to have come to terms with his subject. Many biographers fall in love with the people they scrutinize so closely, but Caro has tended to demonize them. Robert Moses seemed something close to pure evil in Caro's 1974 book *The Power Broker*—as the reader might guess from the subtitle: *Robert Moses and the Fall of New York*. The first volume in his biography of Johnson, *The Path to Power* (1982), was so withering in its attack on the ambition-crazed young Texan that Johnson's old friends who had granted Caro interviews closed the door to him.

Caro certainly does not disguise Johnson's cruelty, duplicity, and mendacity in *Master of the Senate*, and his subject, having reached his forties, remains a coarse bully and philanderer. Yet Caro now finds a public purpose in Johnson's obsession for power. In the introduction, Caro sees "hints of a compassion for the downtrodden, and of a passion to raise them up" in Johnson. "Once he had acquired power in the Senate, the compassion, and the ability to make compassion meaningful, would shine forth at last." Johnson's device was the Civil Rights Act of 1957, which sounded the death knell of legal segregation in the South and opened the door to a different America. For it to pass without a southern filibuster that would put the majority leader in a politically impossible situation was considered miraculous then—and, indeed, it remains so now. This extraordinary accomplishment is the burden of Caro's third volume.

Not that he gets to the point quickly. Leisurely is an understatement to describe Caro's biographical style. He spends the first hundred pages on a political history of the Senate, its decline from magnificence prior to the Civil War to an institution of mediocrity and absenteeism when Johnson entered after his disputed election of 1948. The Senate's dominant figure, a giant among pygmies, was Richard Brevard Russell of Georgia, and Caro spends another forty pages on the life of the southern patriarch who was to play a critically important part in John-

Robert D. Novak, a syndicated columnist and CNN commentator, was coauthor with Rowland Evans Jr. of Lyndon B. Johnson: The Exercise of Power.

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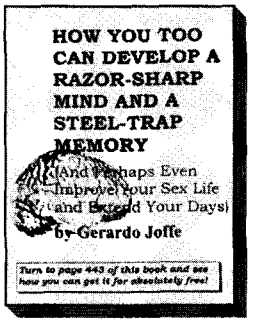

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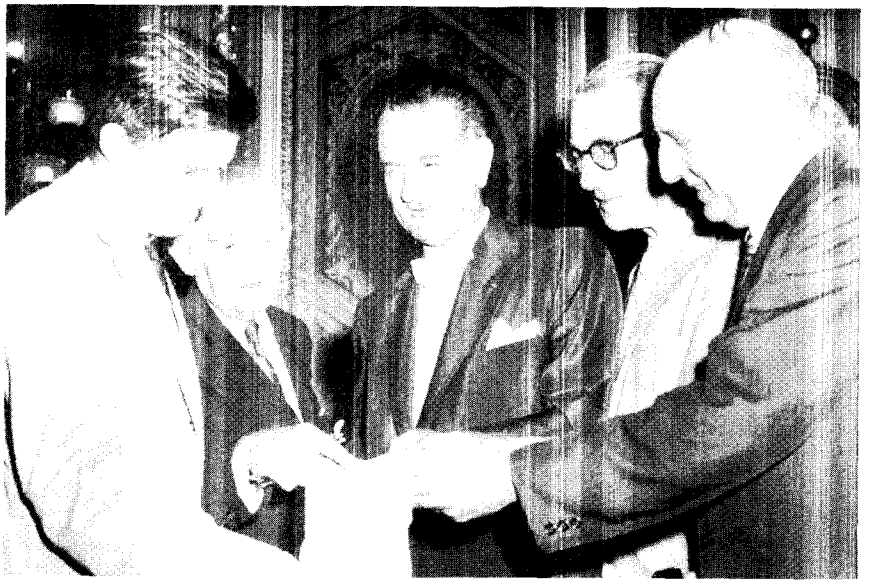

Both: Knopf.

Left: Johnson in 1951. Right: With the victorious senators after passage of a bill in 1957.

son's story. This means that it is not until page 232 that Caro gets to Johnson's performance as a senator, when he portrays Johnson's brutal red-baiting in managing the Senate's rejection of liberal Leland Olds, nominated by President Harry Truman for another term on the Federal Power Commission. An incident brushed over by most biographers is given forty pages and three chapters by Caro—not because it allows him to depict Johnson at his worst, but because it demonstrates Johnson's need to show the Texas oil barons who backed him that they had put their money on the right man.

But Johnson had greater ambitions than being just another southern Democrat voting for oil and against civil rights. The austerely dignified Russell was not the kind of person usually attracted to Johnson, but Johnson courted the lonely Georgia bachelor and brought him around. Russell "saw that Johnson was capable of adapting the Senate to the new age," Caro writes. The Democratic party in the Senate was still dominated by the southerners, which allowed Russell to pick the party's leaders, and he made the ambitious freshman from Texas—at age forty-four, with only four years in the Senate—the chamber's youngest floor leader ever.

It seemed an empty honor. The last two Democratic floor leaders had been defeated in successive elections, the position was hamstrung by Senate rules, and power was really held by the South in an unwritten alliance with conservative Republicans. To succeed at making his position potent, Johnson had to accomplish the impossible: convince Russell and his fellow committee chairmen to breach the seniority rule. That gave the party leader the mighty weapon of dispensing committee assignments.

When Johnson's status changed from minority leader to majority leader in the 1954 election, he took full control. As Caro puts it: "The Senate chamber which had been so sleepy and slow, was now, suddenly, a room filled with energy and passion." In less than six months, "Lyndon Johnson had tamed the untamable Senate." "Had even one of the mighty chairmen realized the long-term effect of what Lyndon Johnson was doing," writes Caro, he "would not have been able to do it." Johnson convinced these barons of the Senate that he should be granted the power "as a means of muffling the liberal firebrands."

Actually, the way he used those new powers was scarcely for conservative ends. Caro puts in fascinating detail Johnson's legislative legerdemain in dominating what was still a conservative body to defeat the Bricker Amendment limiting presidential treaty-making and to adopt public-housing and minimum-wage bills opposed by the Republican administration.

Nothing less than the presidency was the reason this was permitted. Russell had impressed on his fellow southerners that for Johnson someday to enter the White House, they would have to give him the leeway to pass "legislation they would never have permitted another leader to pass." Russell felt the final reconciliation of the old Confederacy never could be achieved without a southerner in the White House, and the only real prospect was Johnson. To make that possible, Russell came to admit, Johnson would have to be recognized as the guiding force behind the first civil rights bill passed since Reconstruction.

Scarcely anybody in 1957 could conceive of Johnson pushing a civil rights bill. For twenty years on Capitol Hill, he had an unblemished record of opposition to civil rights. In 1956, as majority leader, he prevented a House-passed bill from even reaching the Senate. Always, his "compassion" was trumped by "ambition," the need to placate his southern base.

Thus, Caro devotes a full chapter to an incident in 1949 when Johnson arranged an Arlington cemetery burial for a Mexican-American war hero rejected by a funeral home in Three Rivers, Texas, then "backtracked" under pressure from his political backers.

Caro needs more than two hundred pages to tell the engrossing story of how in 1957 Johnson solved his multiple problems in passing the bill. He needed a bill that would not provoke a southern filibuster (these were the days when filibusters were actually waged, not just threatened), which would kill his presidential chances while it likely killed the bill as well. That meant watering down the bill, requiring him to collect moderate Democrats and break into Republican support for a strong bill that had suddenly solidified

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after African-American voters seemed to be supporting the Republicans.

I arrived on Capitol Hill as a twenty-six-year-old reporter for the Associated Press as the great Senate debate began, and I never have seen anything to approach its dramatic intensity in the forty-five years since. With prospects looking poor almost until the end, the battle had everything: vote swapping, parliamentary tricks, impassioned oratory, a secret (and successful) visit by the Senate majority leader to the president. Caro does it all justice with an incomparably thorough job of legislative reporting. Johnson previously "had displayed a mastery of small-scale, intricate legislative maneuver," but now he was exhibiting "legislative" leadership of the government.

The key was Russell's agreement not to filibuster if Johnson could limit the bill to voting rights and weaken their enforcement. A filibuster enlisting Johnson's support would doom him for president, and Caro notes that "the assumption" here was "that a Johnson presidency would be a desirable thing for the South." That Johnson in the White House proved a bitter disappointment to the segregationists is no consolation to surviving liberals of the 1957 battle, who still insist Johnson could have passed more. Caro, surely no apologist for Johnson, suggests this judgment is incorrect. While Hubert Humphrey said the watered-down bill was more a "crumb" than "half a loaf," Caro calls it "more than half a loaf, a lot more. It was hope." It opened the door to federal intervention against a segregated South.

By the time the civil rights bill passed, Caro has reached page 1,035 and literally has run out of space. He also may be as exhausted as his readers, for, after detailing almost every aspect of Johnson's first three years as majority leader, he races over the last three years, 1958 to 1960, in less than nineteen pages. Caro gives short shrift to Johnson's mastery in defeating 1958 efforts to undermine the Supreme Court's authority and his role in the dreary 1960 civil rights legislative fight. He barely mentions Johnson's political manipulations in passing the Landrum-Griffin Labor Reform Act and rejecting Lewis Strauss as secretary of commerce, and completely ignores Johnson's dismal final performance in the post-convention session of 1960.

Nevertheless, *Master of the Senate* is a spectacular piece of historical biography, delicious reading for both political junkies and serious students of the political process. The long-term impact is another matter. Johnson's mastery left no positive permanent imprint on the Senate, as the past four decades demonstrate. Nor was it good preparation for the presidency, as Caro's fourth volume will surely show. The miracle of 1957, however, remains a sufficient legacy for Lyndon Johnson. ♦

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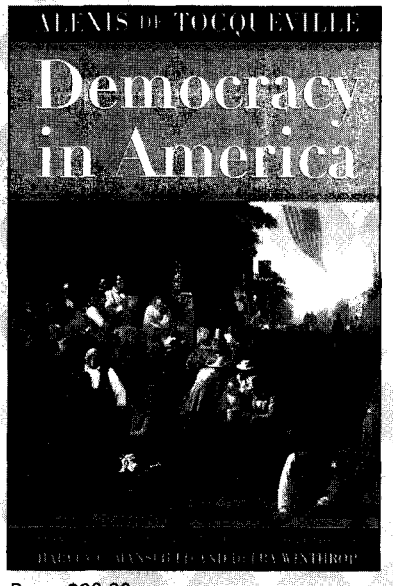

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Sporting Women

At play in the fields of Title IX.

BY BETH HENARY

Title IX, passed by Congress thirty years ago, states simply a non-discrimination policy concerning sex: "No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance." But despite this innocuous language, modeled on the 1964 Civil Rights Act, Title IX has created an astonishingly broad class of victims—both male and female.

Tilting the Playing Field
Schools, Sports, Sex and Title IX
by Jessica Gavora
Encounter, 182 pp., $24.95

Now in *Tilting the Playing Field: Schools, Sports, Sex and Title IX*, Jessica Gavora describes the consequences of a law hijacked by activists who insist on equal outcomes, not equal opportunities. For example, when the U.S. women's World Cup soccer team defeated China in 1999, *Time* called the victorious women the "daughters of Title IX." The women's movement, feminism, and a federal law—everyone except the athletes themselves—were praiseworthy. "The fact that portraying these remarkable athletes as creatures of entitlement—the welfare queens of the sports world—diminishes their achievement never seems to occur to those feminists who use them for a political agenda," Gavora laments.

Contrary to post-World Cup orthodoxy, women's athletic successes are not largely a result of Title IX. The biggest gains in girls' sports participation were in the 1970s, when Title IX was still largely symbolic. Soccer stars Michelle Akers and Brandi Chastain, both over thirty, rode this rising tide, and most of their contemporaries cultivated their skills in youth leagues, outside the reach of the law.

It was not until the Clinton administration that Title IX was enforced with an eye toward equal results. Norma Cantu, Clinton's Office of Civil Rights chief in the Department of Education, responded to Title IX activists' calls, energetically auditing schools for "compliance."

The device Cantu used to go after schools was an interpretation of Title IX that required them to either demonstrate gender proportionality in athletics, show a continued history of expanding sports opportunities for women, or prove their current program fully satisfied female students' demands. Few schools meet the proportionality standard, as it is well documented that women are less interested in playing sports than men. But when Brown University used this argument to defend itself against a suit brought by a female gymnast whose team was demoted to club status for budgetary reasons, the First Circuit Court of Appeals responded: "Interest and ability rarely develop in a vacuum. . . . To allow a numbers-based lack-of-interest defense to become the instrument of further discrimination against the underrepresented gender would pervert the remedial purpose of Title IX."

The ruling in *Cohen* v. *Brown*, which the Supreme Court declined to review, dashed the hopes of colleges who thought they could achieve compliance by showing a history of expansion or satisfied interest. But even with the lucrative scholarships available for women, schools found it nearly impossible to make the percentage of women athletes match that of women in the student body. So, in the early 1990s, they began the only conceivable solution to their dilemma: the elimination of men's athletic teams.

Between 1992 and 1999, 359 sports programs for men were eliminated. Teams cut during that period and since include sixteen college baseball teams (Providence College's Big East champions included), men's swimming and diving at UCLA (a program that had produced twenty-two Olympic medallists), and Miami University men's swimming (out of which diving champion Greg Louganis had come). Where schools have not cut entire programs for men, they have limited the number of walk-ons, almost all male, and scholarships. The Providence baseball team's offer to fund itself was rejected by the school's administration—as, indeed, it had to be, for the problem wasn't money but a need to reduce the number of male athletes.

To read the text of Title IX is to see that Congress never intended this: "Nothing shall be interpreted to require any educational institution to grant preferential or disparate treatment to . . . one sex on account of an imbalance which may exist with respect to the total number or percentage of persons of that sex." But the anti-quota provision in Title IX is utterly ignored these days.

Gender activists care not that Title IX reverse-discriminates against men, or that it is being used to advance some truly ludicrous causes. In the last decade, the statute has been invoked to secure contraceptive and abortion insurance coverage for women at New York University, to shield homosexuals from discrimination, and to argue (ineffectively, by Mary Daly) that the exclusion of men from a college class is necessary to maintain a "safe" learning space for women.

With *Tilting the Playing Field*, Jessica Gavora gathers the evidence necessary to suggest a return to the original intent of Title IX. The androgynous society promoted by Title IX radicals mocks the intelligence of the women they claim to represent. ♦

Beth Henary is an editorial assistant at THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

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A Bad End

Ian McEwan has a lot to atone for.

BY MARGARET BOERNER

In 1971, at age twenty-two, Ian McEwan was Malcolm Bradbury's first student in a new master's degree program at the University of East Anglia in England—in what was then the very American subject of "creative writing." Indeed, East Anglia's program in literature probably would not have developed into a creative-writing degree if McEwan had not insisted upon submitting stories for his classroom assignments.

Atonement
by Ian McEwan
Doubleday, 351 pp., $26

He wrote a set of short stories for his master's thesis, which was published in 1975 as *First Love, Last Rites* and won the Somerset Maugham Award. Since then, he has written *The Cement Garden* (1978), *The Child in Time* (1987), *The Innocent* (1990), *Black Dogs* (1992), *Amsterdam* (1997), and *Enduring Love* (1998). Along the way, he was short-listed twice for Britain's most important literary award, the Booker Prize, and won it for *Amsterdam*.

His latest novel, *Atonement*, tells the story of a thirteen-year-old girl whose invented story of a rape sends her sister's lover to prison—and of the "atonement" she must spend the rest of her life seeking. The book has quickly become one of the most widely discussed novels in years. Words like "masterpiece" and "triumph," and phrases like "resurrection of the novel" and "first great book of the century," have been lavished on McEwan's effort.

This much is certainly true: *Atonement* can't be laid down once it's been picked up, so artfully is the reader drawn into the pace of its prose and the details of its story. As usual, McEwan writes like an angel and plots like a demon. Yet the novel is, as the British term it, a "wind up," a straight-faced and increasingly discomfiting manipulation of a victim (in this case, the reader). In *Atonement* McEwan has gone wrong—very wrong, for in the last two of the book's 351 pages he completely destroys everything that has gone before.

The problem may simply be that McEwan had written himself into a corner and saw no satisfactory way to complete his story. That's bad enough, of course, for the author's failure to come up with a real conclusion dissipates instantly all the plot tension and good will built up in the reader through page after page. But far worse is the *way* McEwan tries to get out of his problem. *Atonement* ends up abjuring all responsibility for what its author has evoked. Was there ever a great novel that concluded by saying, in essence, "I was only kidding—it was just a dream"? Someone needs to sit Ian McEwan down and make him read Frank Kermode's *The Sense of an Ending*. Someone needs to make him look again at *Tom Jones*, *David Copperfield*, *Ulysses*, and *The Things They Carried*, to remind him how plots come to conclusions. Someone needs to wake him up.

McEwan's earliest stories in *First Love, Last Rites* featured incestuous siblings, and actors who become so engrossed by their roles on stage that they actually have sex rather than merely performing it, and a sex criminal who nostalgically recalls his exploits. Such unsettling material soon earned McEwan his reputation as "Ian Macabre," a title given to him by the

Margaret Boerner teaches English at Villanova University.

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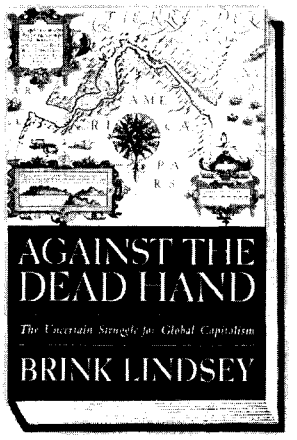

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British tabloids, which are fascinated by his interest in the freakish. In his first novel, *The Cement Garden*, parentless schoolchildren lose all trace of civilization and degenerate into a "natural" state: One is either reading science fiction or masturbating; another becomes a cross-dresser; and a third becomes a fascistic conformist. This book established McEwan as a natural for horror movies, and two of his novels have been filmed by major directors. Indeed, his second novel, *The Comfort of Strangers* (1981), couldn't have had a better filming. The plot takes a handsome, somewhat passive and self-satisfied Englishman and his girlfriend, and puts them on vacation in Italy, where they fall into the hands of a sadistic Italian nobleman (played on screen by Christopher Walken with fine creepiness).

But McEwan is not, in fact, a crude horror monger. His remarkable intelligence always pleases. He can write rings around most others writing in English today. He has a gift for calling up everyday life in spare, accurate detail—while at the same time evoking the potential menace in that detail if the story calls for it. He has a surprisingly witty appreciation of character types and the platitudes that drive them. And he has a gift for plotting so powerful that the reader is driven to finish the story no matter what horrors must be stomached along the way.

What McEwan doesn't have is much concern for character, and his characters can be distinguished from one another only by the places they occupy in his plots. Furthermore, what a character does, let alone what happens to the character, is totally a matter of accident—not even of fate, just of accident.

This is unusual for a novelist. Fiction ordinarily presents us with a world in which everything is meaningful. A wound, a rape, a beggar: Anything depicted becomes relevant to a vision of the novel's world. Thus, endings are ordinarily a product of the world presented in a novel and the protagonist's character acting on that world. Endings are not really surprises; they are inevitable. That's why one can read a good story or see a good movie more than once: One knows what will happen after the first reading, but one is captured by the elegance of its working out.

McEwan's endings, however, are always arbitrary. Take *The Child in Time* (1987), for example. The book displays all of McEwan's electric energies. Set in the near future, it focuses on a horror feared by all parents—that their child might become separated from them and be harmed. Here, a three-year-old girl is abducted from her father, Stephen Lewis, after he has taken her out of his shopping cart so that he can lay groceries on the checkout counter. We hear about the abduction in piecemeal flashbacks a few years later while Stephen (he and his wife having separated under the strain) is alternately stupefied by drink or scanning the streets of London for his daughter. The reader is thus pushed into fearful anticipation of new details about the abduction and the possibility that the child has been murdered. At the same time, the reader is pushed to hope that the daughter will be recognized and recovered.

Ian McEwan
Doubleday

This double anticipation makes for a tense read. The reader's worry is reinforced by the novel's being set in a London full of political corruption. The prime minister promotes Stephen's friend as a successor, but the friend is descending into a second childhood. Begging children—licensed by the government—suggest the lost daughter. And while he is driving the nervous reader down these anticipatory roads, McEwan puts his protagonist on a government board that is writing *The Authorized Child-Care Handbook*, an official publication for Her Majesty's Stationery Office. Lines from the handbook serve as increasingly severe chapter headings—putting forward, for example, that there is "evidence to suggest that the more intimately a father is involved in the day-to-day care of a small child, the less effective he becomes as a figure of authority."

From all this, the reader expects the novel's plot to arrive at a comprehensive ending. But what we get from *The Child in Time* is simply an arbitrary finish: Stephen had gone to see his wife in order to measure the state of their estrangement. She was remote, but they had had intercourse out of loneliness and frustration. The novel ends with her telling him she is about to give birth, and they reunite to bring up their new child. Where is their lost daughter? Where is the consequence of their characters? What were all those references to children throughout the novel aiming at? We never know.

Starting with his first short stories, McEwan has developed a strain of sophisticated social satire, and it sits surprisingly well in his macabre chronicles, helping them to become real in political and historical time. Questioned in an interview about his interest in "diseased minds" and with "diseased and unsettling societies," McEwan replies that "it is all after the event."

> It turns out that what I've written is unsettling, but I don't sit down to think about what will unsettle people next. . . . I honestly was very surprised. My friends, most of whom had had a literary education, seemed to take for granted the field of play in the stories; they had read Burroughs, Céline, Genêt, and Kafka, so that lurid physical detail and a sense of cold dissociation did not stun them. I was not aware of any pattern, and each story seemed to me at the time of writing to be a fresh departure, often with very trivial rhetorical ambitions.

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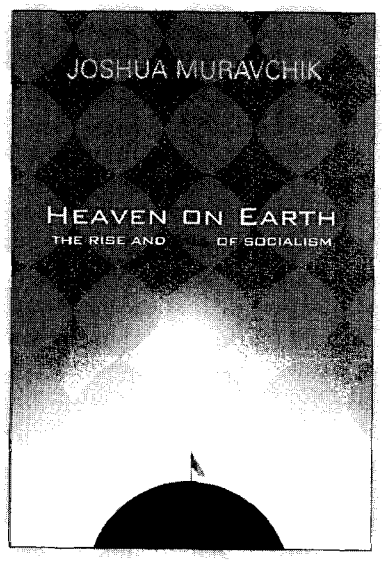
But now, with *Atonement*, McEwan's rhetorical ambition seems to be to write an old-fashioned "great" novel. All the proper characteristics are there: *Atonement* concerns a whole family on the eve of a large war and the difficulties of growing up into that world of war. The novel begins on a summer day in 1935 at an English country house (although McEwan doesn't make the house a Merchant-Ivory stately mansion; indeed, he is typically satirical about the furnishings and provenance of the house) where the Tallises are gathering after Oxford University lets out for the summer holidays.

The father is absent upon government affairs in London (and, it transpires, in the arms of his mistress). But the house is filled with siblings, their friends, their homeless cousins—and the key figure, a daughter named Briony Tallis. Briony is thirteen years old, para-pubescent, and confused about "romance," although she is writing a play on the topic. Throughout the novel, she remains the voice of the writer and expresses in her many thoughts about writing the development of enthusiasms and disappointments common to any writer who thinks about the craft.

"Briony" is a girl's name in Britain, like "Heather," taken from the name of a plant—in this case a thorny vine whose roots were used as a cure for the "hysteria" of menarche in earlier ages. (The names in *Atonement* are the closest McEwan comes to modern symbols.) The adolescent Briony becomes the one who will construct McEwan's *Bildungsroman*—a classic novel of growing up. A bookish child, she misinterprets the erotic tensions in the house, in particular the tensions between her sister Cecilia and Robbie Turner. She dramatizes and draws on novels and romances to convince herself that Robbie is a rapist. In a fever of indignation, she reports he has raped their young cousin, and everyone believes her (the "victim" keeping silent for her own reasons). Briony thereby sends Robbie to prison, separates Cecilia from her lover and from the rest of the family, and consigns her own grown-up self to a purgatory of expiation—the "atonement" of the title. As this section ends, comprising about one third of the book, Briony lies in bed contemplating that "tragedy was bound to bring" her together with Cecilia. It doesn't.

We next see Robbie Turner five years later when he and two other enlisted men are fleeing the advancing German army on the outskirts of Dunkirk. At the same time, Briony is a student nurse at a hospital in central London, attempting through the gruesome work of



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nursing wounded soldiers to atone for her crime. McEwan barely glances at the years in between—let alone at Robbie's arrest, trial, and incarceration or at Briony and Cecilia's intra-family quarrels, or at any character development. Thus, when asked at eighteen why she came to believe there was no rape, Briony simply replies, "I grew up." There is a whole other *Bildungsroman* in this remark, but McEwan turns out not to be writing the traditional *Bildungsroman*.

McEwan's interest in the macabre finds its proper locale in war. Besides exquisitely detailing blood and brains spilling out of fallen bodies—whether on the battlefield or in the hospital—McEwan rises to an empathy that is warmer than his usual nonchalantly objective look at the horrible. When Robbie is lying injured and dazed at Dunkirk waiting for a boat to take him back to England, he decides he must "go back north to the field where the farmer and his dog still walked behind the plow, and ask the Flemish lady and her son if they held him accountable for their deaths" by his failure to move them out of the line of Luftwaffe strafing.

Corporal Nettle hears him muttering in his dazed sleep and wakes him to stop his noise and give him some water. Robbie "tried to lift his head and found that he couldn't." Nettle "raised [Robbie's] head and put the canteen to his lips."

> The water tasted metallic. When he was done, a long steady oceanic swell of exhaustion began to push him under. He walked across the land until he fell in the ocean. In order not to alarm Nettle, he tried to sound more reasonable than he really felt. "Look, I've decided to stay on. There's some business I need to see to."

This is in the grand tradition of men at war but so meticulously written that Robbie is clearly delusional in his heroic stoicism—a case of the writer eating his cake and having it too.

McEwan's dry wit is also much in evidence. As a student nurse, Briony must learn her craft before she tends to the wounded themselves. "This was the time of hygiene lectures, and of practicing blanket-baths on life-size models—Mrs. Mackintosh, Lady Chase, and baby George whose blandly impaired physique allowed him to double as a baby girl." With "unthinking obedience," Briony must learn to carry "bedpans in a stack" and remember "a fundamental rule: Never walk up a ward without bringing something back."

Like all McEwan's work, *Atonement* is tensely plotted. We must wait to find out if a wound will kill Robbie or even if he will be taken off by boat from Dunkirk—just as Briony at the hospital constantly wonders whether Robbie has been killed in the war or will live so that she can at least set the record straight. The book is almost over before we are permitted to learn that Cecilia and Robbie are finally reunited and Robbie is vindicated.

McEwan has set us up for a novel in which character is consequence, and then he makes it inconsequential.

But then McEwan unexpectedly converts the story of Cecilia's and Robbie's later years into a novel that Briony is writing and rewriting. Although everything in the second part of *Atonement* is presented as though it happens on the same plane of reality as what happened in the first part, Briony tells us *on the next-to-the-last page* of the novel that

> It is only in this last version [the novel we are reading] that my lovers end well, standing side by side on a South London pavement as I walk away. All the preceding drafts were pitiless. But now I can no longer think what purpose would be served if, say, I tried to persuade my reader, by direct or indirect means, that Robbie Turner died of septicemia at Bray Dunes on 1 June 1940, or that Cecilia was killed in September of the same year by the bomb that destroyed Balham Underground station. That I never saw them in that year. . . . The problem these fifty-nine years has been this: how can a novelist achieve atonements when, with her absolute power of deciding outcomes, she is also God? . . . I like to think that it isn't weakness or evasion, but a final act of kindness, a stand against oblivion and despair, to let my lovers live and to unite them at the end. I gave them happiness, but I was not so self-serving as to let them forgive me. Not quite, not yet.

How can this be? Cecilia and Robbie are characters just as real as Briony—indeed Cecilia is Briony's *sister*, and Briony has *betrayed* Robbie. It is as if at the end of *Hamlet*, Hamlet were to come on stage and tell us that the deaths of Claudius and Ophelia were a figment of his imagination. In a kind of lunacy that one supposes he imagined was like Ionesco's absurdity, McEwan destroys the structure he has set up and tells us it was all fiction. But we *knew* it was fiction. That is why we were reading it: to enter a world in which things are worked out, however severe the working out may be.

The art of fiction is not *whether* fiction ends happily or sadly but *how* it does so. No one anticipates that Hamlet will live happily ever after, but we do anticipate that the ending will belong on the same plane as the story that has gone before. McEwan has set us up for a novel of consequence—a novel in which character is consequence—and then he makes it inconsequential.

McEwan could, if he wished, have written a novel of arbitrariness. But he has written what pretends to be a novel of significance, and then stuck an arbitrary and weak ending on it, like a novice writer who doesn't know how to close what he's begun. The attempt to pass this off as an aspect of the creation engaged in by the writer Briony is completely unsuccessful. A wind up is a wind up. McEwan's "sense of cold dissociation" this time extends to his readers. ♦

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The Standard Reader

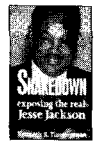
Books in Brief

***Put a Lid on It* by Donald E. Westlake (Mysterious, 247 pp., $23.95).** Westlake has entered new territory—presidential politics—with typically Westlakeian results. A judicious mix of satire and Westlake's trademark comedy of criminals, *Put a Lid on It* tells what happens when an incumbent's campaign learns about a compromising videotape.

The campaign has no choice but to retrieve the tape. Yet they have learned from past mistakes: "We told each other that what went wrong with the Watergate burglary years ago was that it was performed by amateurs. Ideologues, spies, political henchmen. Not a professional thief in the crowd." So the novel opens with an operative's attempt to recruit Francis Meehan, a talented thief who by the malice of the gods has ended up in a federal penitentiary. And then the fun begins, for us, if not necessarily for Meehan.

Political satirists typically have partisan axes to grind. But Westlake is an equal-opportunity mocker. His characters are less malevolent than befuddled and bewildered. By treating them as a source for amusement rather than indignation, Westlake has performed a valuable public service. In addition to being a wonderfully amusing novel, *Put a Lid on It* is a lesson in civility.

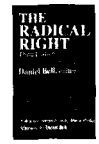
—*Steve Lenzner*



***Shakedown: Exposing the Real Jesse Jackson* by Kenneth R. Timmerman (Regnery, 512 pp., $29.95).** Jesse Jackson has fallen to no more than a sad sideshow in American public life. His collapse can be traced back to the revelation, a year ago, that he had fathered a child out of wedlock. Subsequent examination of his finances established that the much-vaunted civil rights leader was little more than a race-baiting extortionist. And whatever affection remained for Jackson should now be demolished by *Shakedown*, Kenneth Timmerman's definitive account of his career.

From Jackson's false claim that Martin Luther King Jr. died in his arms, down to his involvement with street gangs, terrorists, and dictators, Timmerman describes how Jackson combined radical politics with old-fashioned profiteering. Jackson's anti-Semitism is well documented here, as is his callous disregard for the grass roots of the civil rights movement for which he still claims to fight. As one black community activist tells Timmerman, "Jesse Jackson is a poverty pimp." The only question *Shakedown* can't answer is how Jackson got away with his charade for so long.

—*Noah Oppenheim*



***The Radical Right* by Daniel Bell (Transaction, 526 pp., $29.95).** The indefatigable Transaction Publishers has done a great service by issuing a new edition of *The Radical Right*, the 1963 classic on McCarthyism, the John Birch Society, Coughlinism, and other right-wing movements in America. The book is star-studded with insightful essays by the likes of Richard Hofstadter, David Riesman, Nathan Glazer, Peter Viereck, Seymour Martin Lipset, Talcott Parsons, and Daniel Bell, who has also written a new afterword.

If there was a single theme that connected the essays, it was that the radical right posed a mortal threat to America. Said Bell: "What is new . . . is the ideology of this movement—its readiness to jettison constitutional processes and to suspend liberties, to condone Communist methods in the fighting of Communism." The methodological approach favored by the authors was sociological and psychoanalytic. An observation by Hofstadter is fairly representative: "Pseudo-conservatism is among other things a disorder in relation to authority, characterized by an inability to find other modes for human relationship than those of more or less complete domination or submission."

These very critical essays were written in the heat of battle, and thus should be read in conjunction with more objective accounts of the development of modern American conservatism. The essays also serve as a stark reminder of the limits of social analysis and political prognostication. The authors were consumed by fear of a radical *right*, but within several years of when many of these essays were penned a radical *left* would explode on the scene in a paroxysm of anger and protest.

—*Adam Wolfson*

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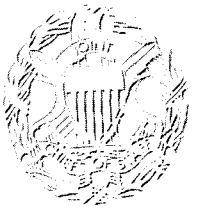
U.S. admits errors in letting Osama bin Laden escape from Tora Bora. ***—News item***

Parody



Memo

To: Sec. Rumsfeld
From: Internal Affairs, Investigative Arm, JCS
Date: May 1, 2002

Dear Mr. Secretary:

As per your request, here is a list of mistakes the U.S. made at Tora Bora, which resulted in OBL's escape:

1. Should have known he was clearing out when he packed up his garden gnomes.
2. Failed to freeze his frequent flier mileage accounts.
3. Failed to follow up after he consulted Madame Cleo about a prospective escape route.
4. Should have taken mail forwarding request more seriously.
5. Relied on barricade set up by Dutch peacekeepers.
6. Recon pilots shouldn't have been fooled by "Geesus Saves" bumper sticker on his Mercedes.
7. Border guards fell for his, "You know, I get that all the time."
8. Never suspected he would travel during new episode of "Antiques Roadshow."
9. Psychological profile erroneous in its conclusion that he would be too afraid to fly after 9/11.
10. Didn't send in Israelis.

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The International Criminal Court—the United States Sends Regrets

David Davenport is a research fellow at the Hoover Institution.

They threw a party at the United Nations recently, but the United States did not attend. The hoopla, celebrated by sixty-six nations and hundreds of nongovernmental organizations, marked the birth of the new International Criminal Court (ICC), but the United States, by refusing to ratify the treaty creating the court, sent its regrets. **The establishment of a major world court without U.S. participation opens a new and troublesome chapter in international law and diplomacy.**

Only a few years ago, the United States would have been expected to support the new court. Most of America's traditional allies, including Great Britain, Canada, and its European friends, are key participants. The United States has been a major supporter of the temporary international criminal tribunals for the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda (precursors of the permanent ICC) and was one of the nations helping to shape the new court.

But a funny thing happened on the way to the International Criminal Court. A group of "like-minded nations" became highly committed to a court with far more sweeping powers than ever before seen or envisioned, and, in the end, they hijacked the process, rushing past U.S. concerns. The Clinton administration was ambivalent, but the Bush administration has been steadfastly opposed, and rightly so.

There is plenty not to like about the ICC. Although the court's primary agenda is war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide, it also has jurisdiction over a new, undefined crime of "aggression." With troops stationed around the world, the U.S. military has reason to be concerned. Instead of cases being referred to the court by the U.N. Security Council, an independent prosecutor will make those highly political decisions. Amazingly, the ICC purports to have jurisdiction over citizens of countries that do not participate in the court, an unprecedented expansion of international law.

Why should Americans care? For one thing, it is highly likely that Americans will be investigated or charged as criminal defendants. Government officials, military officers, and soldiers—even corporate executives—are all possible targets. Another concern is that defendants cannot rely on the right to a jury trial, protection against unreasonable searches, and many other protections afforded by the U.S. Constitution. With considerable anti-American sentiment attending the creation of the court, the ICC could easily become a forum for trying U.S. military and national policy as criminal matters.

In a larger sense, Americans should also be concerned that sixty-six nations, out of the nearly two hundred in the world, have railroaded the formation of this court. Although its humanitarian purposes may be noble, a criminal court of universal **jurisdiction created by one-third of the nations of the world, representing one-sixth of its population, constitutes a major power play.** The party at the United Nations was not just about a court; it was also a celebration of small and medium-sized nations and hundreds of nonprofit organizations attempting to level the playing field with the United States and other world powers.

— David Davenport

Paid for by the Hoover Institution, Stanford University.

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